

OUR GANDHIAN HERITAGE

by

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Author of the Gandhian Technique and Tradition
in Industrial Relation

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PREFACE

This publication is a testimony to a faith in the authentic Gandhian heritage, envisaging new possibilities and prospects of peace and justice all over the world but especially in India.

Gandhiji did not live to achieve the India of his dreams but he left a glowing and imperishable memory as also a great legacy of thoughts and deeds to all who choose to be quickened by his life and thought, and stimulated to act.

I can make no claim to recapture even the outline of this great heritage nor have I attempted this in a small collection of essays and letters. At most they are efforts at comprehension and comparison. They are not exhaustive not even illustrative but only suggestive. In some I tried to co-relate some of his ideas with those of his great contemporaries.

Under obvious compulsion of circumstances I had to leave aside his political ideas and though a witness to his great services in the cause of India's liberation, I had to refrain from referring to them.

A personal digression will perhaps help explain my position. In 1938 when I was an officer of the executive service, I began to write on Gandhiji.

I recall with gratitude that the first to encourage me was Swami Akhilanand of the Rama Krishna Mission. At his instance my article on 'Gandhiji and the Hindu Tradition' was published in the Prabuddha Bharat of June 1938.

I continued to write on the non-political aspects of Gandhiji's life and thought for the newspapers and journals. In 1956 when I was Labour Commissioner, I published my treatise on 'Gandhian Technique and Tradition in Industrial Relations' with the active encouragement and assistance of Dr B. C. Roy, then Chief-minister of West Bengal.

Essays and articles in this volume are mostly reprints from the Statesman, Amrita Bazar Patrika, Prabuddha Bharat, and other journals ; and this acknowledgment to their editors with

thanks, must be placed on record, as I could not approach them in all cases.

My grateful thanks are due to all who encouraged me in my writings and I am happy to include among them, the late Dr Zakir Hussain and the present Rastrapati Sri V. V. Giri, Prof Nirmal Kumar Bose and Dr. Priyadarajan Roy.

I only need add that this publication would not have been possible without the assistance of my nephew Prof Somendranath Bose and the enterprise of my publisher Sri Janakinath Bose for whom it is an act of faith.

My age, incapacity and failing vision prevented an worthier attempt at publication.

I must stress before I conclude that the interpretations and assumptions involved in my work are entirely my own.

R. N. Bose

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Calcutta-29

Dedicated
to
The memory of my Dharma-Ma
and
those others who by their examples of
Love and Kindness
helped me in my endeavour
to combine some idealism
with hard realism of life

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OUR GANDESIAN HERITAGE

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE MAHATMA

In our day or any other, the heritage that Gandhi left behind him belongs to anyone who will have an option for it and consider it an imperative for action. For his modesty did not prevent Gandhi from aspiring to involve in his experiments the whole of mankind. He said: "I teach what is ancient and I try to practice what I preach. I claim that what I practise is capable of being practised by all because I am a very ordinary mortal, open to the same temptations as the least among us".

He summed up his basic principle in the words: "My work will be finished if I succeed in carrying conviction to the human family that every man or woman, however weak in body, is the guardian of his or her self-respect and liberty". At the same time, he stressed "Non-violence of my conception is a more active and a more real fighting force against evil than violent retaliation whose very nature is to increase evil".

This led him to build his scheme of non-violent resistance primarily on persuasion or conversion through self-suffering. "Please take me as a finger post on the road that indicates the way to mass change or mass conversion" and, as a supreme individualist, he urged his associates to follow up according to their own development—adhering only to the spirit and not the letter of his teaching. The significance of this advice should be considered in the light of the new strategy of non-violence that has emerged, not only in India but elsewhere.

It has been rightly said that Gandhism, after his death, seemed to go through a prism, coming out on the other side split into many beams of light, each carrying some quality of Gandhi but none with quite that concentrated power that helped to overthrow an empire.

In India his ideas, though oft-quoted, faded as they were not followed up. Soul-searching among his associates continued but there was no tangible evidence of that ocular

demonstration of non-violent transformation of society—the India of Gandhi's dreams.

Vinoba Bhave who fulfilled all his expectations made a fresh start in 1951 with the Bhoodan movement, forging a new instrument for presenting non-violence to India to deal with her chronic problems of poverty and unemployment in the villages. "My target is 50 million acres of land. Since there are 300 millions of cultivated land in India and an average family has five members, I feel that every family may give one-sixth of its land-holding.....accepting the poor landless man as the sixth member of the family. This is a way of bringing a peaceful revolution in the country by Bhoodan".

Vinoba now spends his time walking from village to village demanding land through love and goodwill, but the technique for the conversion of the landholding classes, though visualized, often proves elusive.

Vinoba does not depart from the ideals of his master and is a firm believer and consistent worker for Sarvodaya. But he continues the experiment mainly in India's villages with no ambition to guide the world in the path of non-violence. Though he has not reached his target, he has received a few million acres of land and has suitably modified his demand to Gramdan.

He continues his mission of transformation of villagers by love, service and prayer with Gandhi's words ever ringing in his ears: "I should work single-handed in the implicit faith that what I fail to make clear today shall be clear some day of itself, or if God wishes it, through some apt word which He may put in my mouth or some apt work which He may prompt me to do".

Among Vinoba's devoted supporters is J. P Narayan, an intimate associate of Gandhi who was converted to non-violence after a hectic career as a fire-brand revolutionary. Jayaprakash now stands aloof from the battle of power-politics raging in India. An intellectual with a self-effacing character,

his propaganda for Bhoodan has helped Vinoba in his movement. In many ways he is the symbol of India's Soul-searching.

But if Gandhi's mantle fell on Vinoba, his shadow—even in his life time—appeared to be Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Frontier Gandhi. For ceaseless sacrifice to the last limit and heroic pursuit of an ideal, he stands towering among his Khudai-Khidmatgars—servants of God—who had thrown away their weapons to follow Gandhi's non-violent lead.

The Frontier Gandhi believed firmly in non-violence as an instrument for change and said, "Whatever may be the case with others, I am convinced there is no other way of salvation for the Pathans except through non-violence. I say this from our experience of the miraculous transformation that even the little measure of non-violence that we have attained has wrought in our midst. We have shed our fear and we are no longer afraid".

Foremost among those not within the orbit of Gandhi's direct and personal influence to imbibe the lesson of non-violence, Martin Luther King (Jr.) achieved, like Gandhi, the glory of martyrdom for a cause which he loved to call his dream.

He believed in an America free from injustice. "I have a dream that one day the sons of former slaves and sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood". What he owed to Gandhi is best indicated by what he himself said in 1958: "Like most people, I had heard of Gandhi but I never studied him seriously. As I read I became deeply fascinated by his campaigns of non-violent resistance. The whole concept of Satyagraha was profoundly significant to me. As I delved deeper into the philosophy of Gandhi, my scepticism concerning the power to love gradually diminished, and I came to see for the first time its potency in the area of social reform. Love, for Gandhi, was a potent instrument for social and collective transformation. It was in this Gandhian emphasis on love and non-violence that I discovered the method that I had been seeking for so many months. The intellectual and moral satisfaction that I failed to gain from Bentham and Mill, Marx and Lenin, I found in the non-violent resistance philosophy of Gandhi".

King's big civil disobedience and boycott movement in 1956 had its immediate tangible success in the de-segregation of the Montgomery City Bus Lines. According to observers, it may have done as much for the white majority as for the Negro minority in recalling Abraham Lincoln's memorable words "Our defence is in the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, everywhere".

In his Gandhi Memorial Lecture in 1963, Martin Luther King eloquently affirmed, "Violence is unpractical because the old eye-for-eye philosophy ends up leaving everybody blind. This method is wrong. This method is immoral. It is immoral because it is a descending spiral ending in destruction for everybody. It is wrong because it seeks to annihilate the opponent rather than convert him. I am still convinced that non-violence is the most potent weapon available to the Negro in his struggle for freedom and justice. If we succumb to the temptation of using violence in the struggle, unborn generations will be the recipients of long and mighty bitterness".

His life-long sacrifice for gaining citizenship rights in South Africa won Chieftain Albert John Luthuli wide recognition; he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1960.

His dedication to what conscience dictates as truth—not merely as a matter of words but as a way of living the truth—gave his struggle for gaining opportunities for the unfettered development of the African people a moral significance. Much of his autobiography, "Let My People Go" has the Gandhian ring of commitment and many of its passages parallel the earlier "Satyagraha in South Africa."

Luthuli's public statement in 1952, which was significantly issued jointly by the African National Congress and the Natal Indian Congress, runs as follows: "I have embraced the non-violent passive resistance technique in fighting for freedom because I am convinced that it is the only legitimate and humane way that could be used by people, denied—as we are—effective constitutional means to further aspirations".

Thus both Luthuli and Martin Luther King actively resisted the evil of racism and both believed that one who tolerates this evil without protesting against it, is really cooperating with it. But Martin Luther King's horizon widened and he developed a new strategy of non-violence that could reduce the perils of racism, if it could not eliminate it altogether. As he eloquently said, "If persisted with the same discipline and patience attained by Gandhi, it may achieve a degree of justice which neither moral persuasion nor violence could gain". As his instrument for social change to secure unfettered development of all those who are deprived in a cruelly unjust society, he forcefully advocated non-violence of disciplined planning and intense commitment, of sustained direct action on a mass-scale.

"I am convinced that even very violent temperaments may be channelled through non-violent discipline, if the movement is moving if they can act constructively and express through an effective outlet their very legitimate anger".

Luthuli was less of an idealist and his scope was limited, though he fought evil in a restricted sphere with the zeal of Gandhi trying to impose restraints on the very passions he provoked and considered to be legitimate against the white power structure. His explaining away the riots and even the burning of the churches which have become "distorted symbols", might appear to estrange him from Gandhi who was more of a perfectionist and would, under similar conditions, undertake a fast of atonement. Martin Luther King would suggest sublimation of the anger though he would not question its legitimacy and envisage coalition of socially aware forces operating outside the Governmental framework.

More and more he came to believe that non-violent defiance for social change must be international because of the interlocking nature of the problems. He held that even entrenched problems like the racial policy of the South African Government could be tackled on this level. Both Luthuli and Martin Luther King were pious Christians and took their Christianity with them much as Gandhi took his religion.

Father Huddleston's was no less the urge of Christianity to get into the thick of the struggle. As a priest of the Church of England he joined the mission at Sophia in South Africa in 1943. Soon he came to see that service to fellow Africans meant being completely involved in their struggles and hardships and a readiness to work against the oppressive laws of the South African Government.

Gandhi had affirmed that to the famished God can dare appear only in the form of bread and it was his conviction that any religion that professes to be concerned only with the souls of men while remaining unconcerned about social, political and economic conditions that scar the soul is spiritually inadequate. As Gandhi wrote, "To see the universal and all pervading spirit of Truth (his other name for God)—one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself". Such a man is Trevor Huddleston, the missionary crusader against racism. Right from 1952 this priest, who identified himself wholly with the African National Congress, campaigned against unjust laws declaring openly: "When a Government degenerates into a tyranny, its laws cease to be binding on its subjects".

When the Bantu Education Act was passed in 1954 he closed his school at Johannesburg rather than let the Government take over this "Black Eton" of a white missionary. In his book "Naught for Comfort" he set forth the details of the struggle for human dignity in South Africa. His advocacy of non violent civil disobedience has helped the spread of social awareness.

Danilo Dolci, the Sicilian Gandhi, is a humanist-cum-social scientist who uses non-violence as a mighty lever. Introducing him, Aldous Huxley stresses his quest of a new approach in these words: "In a society such as ours, a society of enormous numbers subordinated to an ever-expanding and omnipotent technology, a new Gandhi, a modern St. Francis needs to be equipped with much more than compassion and seraphic love. It is only by making the best of both worlds—the world of the head no less than the world of the heart—that the 20th century saint can hope to be effective".

Danilo Dolci is certainly one of those modern specialists in the instrument of non-violence who has developed the strategy of Gandhi. He organized a group of the poor unemployed in a remote corner of Sicily and started to work, without payment on a local road that was badly in need of repair. Promptly the police swooped down on these unorthodox benefactors of society and began to make arrests. There was no violence. For with Dolci, as with Gandhi, non-violence is a matter of principle and policy. The strategy of reverse strike for work was initiated but in due course Dolci was tried and given two months' imprisonment.

Later Dolci widened his sphere of action in the city of Palermo where he posed the problem of unemployment and misery and demanded that the problem be resolved by reshaping the structure of society. For Dolci, any means will do so long as they get you there and so long as violence does not destroy the good work being done by devoted men and women who are working in the belief of Victor Hugo's famous saying : "The guilty one is not he who commits the sin but he who causes the darkness. If the soul is left in darkness, sins will be committed".

More orthodox ways were pursued by Welthy Fisher who, at the age of 68 in 1947, attended a prayer meeting in Delhi and felt that her life had been enriched by a touch of greatness and began her work of dispelling the darkness by her adult literacy work in Uttar Pradesh in India. She answered the call of service of Gandhi as Pierre Ceresole had done earlier in accepting Gandhi's demand for voluntary poverty. The international work camps and peace brigades he organised sought above all to remove the barriers among men—of ignorance of money and of moral climate.

But the inescapable moral presence of Gandhi was felt even by those who did not take his name. Abbe Pierre of Paris, whose rag-picking pushed him to eminence, started building homes for the homeless in the planning zone of Paris without any plan being sanctioned by the authorities. In his statement he explained, "we regret having to build illegally.

But there are some urgent cases where the law of conscience overruns the written law."

In the concluding volume of his autobiography Bertrand Russell expresses his doubts whether the world will be able by peaceful means to raise the conditions of the poorer nations but concedes that it is good for a community to contain some people who feel the dictates of humanity so strongly that even in war-time they still obey them.

Nonetheless with Rev. Michael Scott, he launched the Appeal Committee of 100 in 1916 for a movement of non-violent resistance to nuclear war and weapons of mass extermination. Later in 1960 he published his leaflet on civil disobedience. He argued that though some have moral objections and some believe that this method is not likely to achieve its object, most people will admit that non-violent civil disobedience is justified when the law demands the individual concerned to do something which he considers wicked. "The line between proper acceptable civil disobedience and unacceptable civil disobedience comes with the reason for it being committed,—the seriousness of the object for which it is committed and the profundity of the belief in its necessity". Thus the difference is more in the philosophy than in the method with Gandhi.

Thoreau and Tolstoy outlined non violent resistance but hardly foresaw its incalculable possibilities. But as Gandhi affirmed, "We are astonished these days at the amazing discoveries in the field of violence. But I maintain that far more undreamt, seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field of non-violence". In this emphasis, Gandhi drew not so much on his undimmed vision as on the success of his experiments in the personal, social and political sphere. It would have gladdened his heart to know of J. B. S. Haldane's non-violent biological research. The distinguished scientist said: "Gandhi was quite clear that men have a duty of non-violence to animals. There is no reason why biological research should not be conducted on Gandhian principles... India has made many contributions to world culture. Perhaps the greatest is the ideal of non-violence. Europe's

greatest contribution is scientific method. If these can be married their offspring may raise mankind to a new level".

Gandhi had written to Mira (Miss Slade): "I am trying to put people on the road. But it will need many Gandhis to bring the experiment of non-violence to perfection".

When more Vinobas and Martin Luther Kings come up to enlarge the Gandhian heritage and more and more people imbibe Haldane's brilliant methods and Bertrand Russell's searching intellect, perhaps the perfected instrument of non-violence will emerge. Till then, in a world where fundamental problems—both material and spiritual—have been neglected, and where the most potent instrument for change is not yet in sight, Gandhi survives as a towering finger-post to a few and as a compelling question-mark to many.

[Reprint from the Gandhi Supplement to the Statesman, Oct. 2, 1969]

GANDHI AND SCHWEITZER

The two great contemporaries never met, though each served humanity in our time—in his own way and eventually came to be a symbol of a new power in man. Often they spoke the same words though in different accents. They also made the same sort of sacrifice—endowing their lives with a meaning which is more than the sum of their achievements.

The glory of a martyr's death in a great cause was Gandhi's crowning achievement. Schweitzer—the apostle of mercy, continued his work as a medical missionary upto his ninetieth year. He would not rest nor leave his post though so many of his friends as well as critics urged the white Doctor to go back. 'I am prepared for any effort, any sacrifice. It seems impossible for me to abandon the Africans.' He wrote and he believed as ever that the tragedy of life is what dies inside a man when he lives.

'Do not trouble yourself for Dr. Schweitzer'—he advised his admirers—'Rather strengthen your belief in the capacity of man to become more and more respectful to life.'

We cannot measure any man's real greatness by any standard of comparisons but greatness may 'well be related in terms of what his work cost a man.' Judged by this standard, they not only came close to each other in greatness but set such a pattern of renunciation that what Einstein rightly said of Gandhi may well be applied to the other as well. 'Generations to come will scarce believe that such as these, ever in flesh and blood, walked upon this earth.'

It is not the purpose of this paper to record the events of their lives. They are written for all who care to read in their revealing autobiographies. Gandhi's *Experiments with Truth* makes his life an open book. In *My Life and Thought* Schweitzer sets forth his tale of spiritual struggle and triumph. For both, religion had for its function the ordering of life and the guidance of action. 'My life is my message,' said Gandhi.

The Doctor wrote, 'Instead of trying to get acceptance of my ideas, I decided that I would make my life my argument.'

Both renounced the life of worldliness and to some extent, even the life of contemplation, to be preoccupied by the practice and pursuit of what Gandhi called the Truth and what Schweitzer named the Good. Both detached themselves from material things but not from their duties towards other men. For both there was no limit to the obligation of self-sacrifice because both were provided so plenteously within that they needed very little without.

Schweitzer was a great philosopher unlike Gandhi who categorically stated, 'There is no such thing as Gandhism and I do not want to leave any sect after me. I do not claim to have originated any new principle or doctrine.'

But though he did not belong to the distinguished galaxy of philosophers, Gandhi—by an evolutionary process and through sheer force of his will and efforts, attained a profundity of thought and ideas so much ahead of our time that humanity may not be able to realize them for centuries. It is not possible to discuss or even to refer to most of his ideas ranging from Atom bomb to birth control here, but it may be stated that anything useful to life or interesting to mind became an object of his enquiry, scrutiny and criticism.

It was much the same with Schweitzer, who also discussed Gandhi's ethics and religion in his *Indian Thought and its Development*. Though we may not agree with all that he wrote, his distant view had its significance in so far as it was not distorted by inessentials. It was penetrating and profoundly appreciative. According to him, "Gandhi continues what the Buddha began. In Buddha the spirit of Love set itself the task of creating different spiritual conditions in the world. In Gandhi, it undertakes to transform all worldly things and conditions.' And according to Gandhi, political activity as well must be governed by the spirit of *ahimsa*. 'For me, there are no politics that are not at the same time a religion,—wrote Gandhi.

Never before has an Indian taken so much interest in concrete realities as has Gandhi. He compels Indian ethics to come to grips with reality. He ended the suffering of a calf in its prolonged death agony by giving it poison. This is Gandhi's ethical life affirmation. 'Ahimsa freed from the principle of non-activity becomes a call to the principle of compassion.'

He then summed up thus, 'But even if one doubts whether Gandhi's method is right, one must recognize his great service in pointing the profound truth that only activity in an ethical spirit can really accomplish anything. By a magnificent paradox Gandhi can regard activity in the world as the highest form of renunciation of the world.'

It has been said that great men often come to life in their paradoxes. Gandhi and Schweitzer confirmed this in many ways. Their greatness is of a kind that escapes and defies definition. Laurence Housman stressed this when he said, 'You are a strange man, Mr. Gandhi. You are so sincere that you embarrass us ; so simple that you baffle us'. Even some of his close associates were perhaps no less puzzled by the terribly meek Mahatma as were some associates of the great humanitarian by some aspects of his passion and compassion.

No orthodox Christian followed more closely in his Master's steps than the man, who wrote the *Quest of the Historical Jesus*. Yet he was accused of being a stubborn heretic, of saving bodies not souls and his jungle hospital was considered as famous as, in the view of others, it was notorious. This is because rationalism and ethics dominated his life of Christianity in practice. He modelled himself on Jesus but he did not consider Jesus to be the son of God. And this was his blasphemy.

Gandhi was not a non-conformist. He was a rational but devout Hindu, who firmly believed however, 'Like the watch the heart needs the winding of purity and the head of reason or the dweller within ceases to speak.'

For both, the spirit is a mighty force for transforming things and for both, it is most effective when it incarnates in

human beings, who represent it by proving their readiness to live and, if need be, to die for it.

Life is sacred to both. Gandhi wrote, 'To see the universal and all pervading spirit of Truth, face to face, one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself.' So, he would like to wipe every tear from every eye. Schweitzer shared this view of the fundamental unity of life and claimed that 'the ethic of Reverence for life is the ethic of love widened into universality.' His experience of that September day in 1915 on the Ogowe river, when the idea of Reverence for life and its impact—'On the will to Live', flashed across his mind might be called mystical, had he not been so strongly attracted to rationalism. This also seems paradoxical in view of his whole outlook on life.

The ethic of self-sacrifice by compassion which the great Doctor practised and the obligation of self-sacrifice for attaining *moksa* (salvation) which the Mahatma personified had a subtle difference both in content as well as in form. 'Ye are all brethren'—this call inspired Schweitzer. 'Ye art all one'—this message of the Upanisads and the *Gītā* gave assurance to Gandhi's religion and ethics all along. But for both ethics is the essence of religion.

Gandhi wanted not only to involve the whole of mankind in his experiments but he believed that what was possible for him was possible for all. Schweitzer also thought likewise and invited all to a 'career of the spirit' when in renunciation and sacrifice, 'we must give most of all ourselves'.

He believed in man's capacity to 'grow, to evolve, to become more and more respectful to life and to derive joy from the exercise of moral imagination.'

C. F. Andrews, his friend, wrote to testify in his book *What I owe to Christ*—'He gave me the greatest help of all by the example of his own life. His character has been fashioned line upon line, by the living Christ whom he worships.'

A TALE OF TWO FRIENDS—GANDHI AND ANDREWS

On 30.3.40 Andrews dictated the following last message :

'During these days of waiting since the decision was taken that I should have this operation, my thoughts have all the while been with God and I know that whatever happens His will be done.

'I have been wonderfully helped by thoughts of Gurudev and what I have learnt at Santiniketan ; also by thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi and what I have learnt from him all these pas years.....'God has given me in my life the greatest of all gifts, namely the gift of loving friends.

I would acknowledge again what I have acknowledged in my books, this supreme gift of friendship both in India and in the other parts of the world.'

How this gift of friendship came to him, Andrews has only partly indicated in his spiritual autobiography 'What I owe to Christ'.

This was by no ordinary means nor by chance but mainly by earning the blessings of the helpless and humble human beings through whom God's own blessings reached him, endearing him in the process to most who came to know him and admire his life that was lived in continual obedience to the teaching of his Lord and Master.

Tagore's record of this precious friendship is fortunately treasured in his inimitable 'Letters to a friend' and in Andrews' many letters to him from abroad.

The Visva Bha:ati News and the collection known as Andrews papers contain valuable information as well.

With Gandhi also Andrews carried on a life long correspondence but this has not been collected nor published though high expectations were raised about their possible publication.

It remains to be seen if the centenary of Andrews which is coming, will make available this unique correspondence.

That Andrews was equally intimate with Gandhi, his equal in age and in some ways more like-minded not only in spiritual make-up but also in mental and physical energy is well known. In some attitudes and convictions as well as practices such as of shaking off all possessions as burdensome they were like spiritual twins.

But the record and instances of their affection and solicitude for each other are less well-known than their constant comradeship in causes they both served so nobly.

It will be perhaps appropriate to try to sample the rich flavour of this significant friendship in human terms.

Writing to Tagore on January 14, 1914 from Pretoria Andrews traces from its origin his friendship and discerning admiration thus :

‘I have been living most of my time with Gandhi himself and have learnt to know him as a friend. He is all that we, in India, felt him to be and more besides, a saint of the heroic type, of action rather than of contemplation.

‘He is essentially Indian in his inner life though touched by the activity of the West. Everyday I see more and more the magnificent heroism of his position, the originality of his mind and tendencies of his nature.

‘Yet much as I wished to do so I could not love him immediately, instinctively as I loved you when I saw you.

‘The unity of spirit I feel in your presence I cannot as yet feel in the presence of my Gujrati friend.

‘Here I find I have to cut channels for love to run freely and to get past the barriers of mere kindness and friendliness. . . . ‘If on the other hand I do some simple act, he is deeply touched and love flows forth.’

In more mundane terms, this was not love at first sight. But soon enough the course of love and friendship begins to

run smooth despite initial hesitation and other built-in barriers of race, culture and tradition. What it came to be like—after an epoch—is best seen in the moving tribute of Gandhi in the Harijan of April 9, 1940.

‘Nobody probably knew Charlie Andrews as well as I did. Gurudev was Guru—Master—to him. When we met in South Africa we simply met as brothers and remained as such to the end. There was no distinction between us. It was not friendship between an Englishman and an Indian. It was an unbreakable bond between two seekers and servants’.

Why he came to be known as ‘Deenabandhu’, the friend of the humble, as Gandhi’s brother or the wandering Christian who was Christ’s faithful apostle—may not be known to people who had no opportunity to see his benign face or feel the healing touch of his radiant personality.

His memory is receding in the corridors of history in the inevitable process of time as one of the many crusaders of a stirring time.

Yet Gandhi himself confidently predicted, ‘Not one of his heroic deeds will be forgotten so long as India and England live.’

It may soon appear that most of us live but in our sleep of forgetfulness.

No attempt is possible here to detail his many deeds in extinguishing pain and fighting injustice with all his might in a wide field of activity almost all over the world. Nor can his crowded life of momentous events be brought into sharp focus within our limited space.

Only the optimum of faith can enthuse one to bring out the inspiration, the sincerity and the beauty of a life dedicated to love and friendship which in the luminous words of St. John calls upon,

“Beloved, let us Love one another, For Love is of God.
He that loveth not, knoweth not God,
For God is Love.”

This all-embracing love was the main-spring of all his deeds. This made him refuse to condone by passivity or by default the evil in distant lands.

Elaborating this, in his spiritual autobiography he writes, 'I have humbly to confess that continually I found myself a learner at the feet of saints whose life-surrender to the will of God was more whole-hearted than my own...Owing to Tagore and Gandhi, I got the shock I needed.'

Continuing he writes in the same book, 'Nearly twenty years ago I met Gandhi when he was comparatively unknown.The greatest happiness of all has been to find by personal experience how the spirit of living Christ has broken through barriers and Christ's messenger came in Gandhi.'

Of Schweitzer also he gratefully writes, 'He brought me back to living Christ. He gave me the greatest help of all by example of his own life.'

In 'My Life and Thought' this great servant of Christ who followed the living command of the 'One unknown by the lake-side' writes how "while the African Sun shines in the dark shade we, black and white sit side by side and feel that we know by experience the meaning of the words—'And all ye are brethren.'

In his long career of loving service Andrews had the good fortune of sharing this experience but nowhere more strongly than in the episode described below in the luminous tribute he paid in the Commemoration volume :

'There was the still after-glow of a dark evening twilight at the Asram called Phoenix, near Durban. The strain of a long day of unwearied ministry among the poor was over and Mahatma Gandhi was seated under the open sky, tired almost beyond human endurance, but even at such a time he nursed a sick child on his lap who clung to him with a pathetic affection.

'A Zulu girl was also seated next to him. He asked me to sing 'Lead, Kindly Light' as the darkness grew deeper and deeper. Even then, though he was much younger, his frail body

was worn with suffering that could never be laid aside even for a moment.

'I can remember how we sat in silence when the hymn was finished and he then repeated to himself those two solemn lines at the close.'

But despite the overwhelming impact of this gleam of greatness Andrews never put Gandhi on a pedestal of unapproachable sanctity and adoration beyond human love and affection.

To the last day of his life Gandhi was 'Mohan' to him. In ways often difficult to understand but amazing nonetheless, even while he spoke and wrote of Gandhi's supreme sacrifice and of his 'greater love whereof Christ speaks' 'when a man lays down his life for fellow men'—his warm human friendship never bypasses frank and outspoken openness of mutual affection though Andrews never fell short in reverence for his unique friend.

It has been said that great men often come to life in their paradoxes. The great friendship of Gandhi and Andrews confirmed this in many ways and certainly it conformed to no ordinary pattern. It was a strange and vibrant love, simple, sincere and self-effacing at the same time endowing life with a meaning that can only be glimpsed.

Andrews was Gandhi's equal in age and a tried partner of years in service. They had the piquant habit of thinking aloud in each other's company which was puzzling to those who happened to be near them and the timing and vehemence of their arguments on the issues of Gandhi's recruitment campaign or Khilafat question embarrassed their common friends but they never minded.

Thus Gandhi writes from his sickbed on 30/8/18—'Your love messages are all before me. They are like a soothing balm. The more I contemplate this illness the more deeply I realize what love of man to man must be and, therefore, love of God to man. I do wish you will not worry about me. I approach every one of your letters with a shudder lest anything, like my illness should interrupt your noble work for Gurudev.'

When Andrews fell ill a little earlier Gandhi wrote to him in a lighter vein :

My dear Charlie,

I shall be good this time and not accuse you of crimes against laws of God and man regarding health.

But there is no doubt that you need a curator euphemistically called a nurse. And how I would like to occupy that post. If you cannot have a nurse like me who would make love to you but at the same time enforce strict obedience to doctor's orders, you need a wife. But marriage is probably too late and not being able to nurse you myself I can only fret.'

After this exquisite dig Gandhi probably recollects that he must live up to his reputation and adds :

'It is not given to me to nurse you now but I can do better if I pray and that is precisely what I am going to do.'

Elsewhere he writes to his old friend whose absent-minded zeal was well known :

'Will you not rest and be thankful for a while. Work is prayer but it can also be madness.

With love deeper than even you can fathom, your own Mohan.'

But as Gandhi was wont to complain, 'Charlie listens, laughs and repeats the performance. He could lose everything except his friends.'

At the same time Gandhi had the highest opinion of his friend's intellectual attainments.

On the eve of relinquishing his editorial work he wrote on September 29, 1924 :

'Young India and Nabajiban are my delight. But my medical tyrants forbid and I must suspend the editorial responsibility. Charlie Andrews insists on editing Young India and I gladly accept the offer.

We are as blood-brothers. And the reader will be glad to have the same message rendered in a chaster and purer style. English is after all a foreign tongue to me. Charlie is a master of it.....' Gandhi here mentions that the same message will follow because he knew that despite many notable differences

of opinion on the question of Khilafat, non-cooperation and burning of foreign cloth, his friend shared his fundamental views on truth and non-violence and that their unity of outlook of life and its problems stood above the fringe differences. Besides there was the tested love and friendship which had admitted no impediments over the years.

Writing on the occasion of bonfire of the foreign cloths, Andrews wrote, 'Do you know I now almost fear to wear foreign cloth. You know when anything you do hurts me I must cry out to you and this has hurt me.'

Gandhi's typical letter runs thus: 'You have been pouring your heart to me on the Khilafat and other matters whereas I have been unable to reciprocate because of the great strain I have been undergoing just now. All the same you know that you are ever in my mind. I know what spiritual struggles mean. If I only could infect India with belief in the weapon of unadulterated suffering—in self-suffering, I could bring down insolence from its pedestal in a moment....I need not worry you about my views.....my moral position need not cause you anxiety.'

This was more easily said than done, as no spiritual Don Quixote could help tilting against windmills of ideas.

In Young India of 31/10/24 an interesting conversation is reported wherein the two friends argued and agreed to differ on such controversial points as the wearing of khadder and on spinning as a religious duty. Andrews could not accept Gandhi's idea of making khadder a test of moral fitness nor his call to hold all foreign made cloth 'impure'.

Such talks between the two on subjects of a memorable and serious nature were frequent even before and after the famous fasts of those days. As Mahadev Desai stresses, barring the discussion with Pandit Motilal Nehru this was the first long discussion when Gandhi agreed to differ about foreign cloth and tried to show that it was impure in the sense that air gathered from the plains of Delhi would be an impure commodity to be inhaled in the heights of Simla. Naturally Andrews did not see it like that.

On 5/4/19 Gandhi had seen the difficulty of Andrews who often acted as a link between him and Tagore and tried to cushion the shock of their conflicting opinions on non-cooperation and other important topics. He therefore wrote to Tagore :

‘Charlie’s friendship has been to me an invaluable treasure ; even his adverse opinions, he shares with me. Though they may not make me change my course, it serves the purpose of a light-house.’

Unlike Tagore, Andrews despite his differences, threw himself into Gandhi’s five-fold programme of national awakening not as a politician but as a man of religion, saying :

‘Independence of India complete and perfect is a religious principle with me because I am a Christian’.

In his view, Christ, his Lord wanted deeds and not words. His main job was therefore that of helping in his lone struggle his great friend by innumerable deeds of love and service performed so that ‘India may take an independent place among the nations.’ This was one of the highways to his kingdom of God on earth.

‘Mohan, I see Swaraj is coming : both Englishmen and Indians can make it come, if they will.’

This was his parting gift of faith and hope to Gandhi as he held his dying friend’s hand in 1940.

GANDHI AND EINSTEIN

On the occasion of Gandhi's seventieth birthday in 1939, Einstein paid probably the finest tribute to his great contemporary who was yet hidden to a certain extent in clouds of myth and misunderstanding in the western world. In a significant sense this was the deep calling unto the deep and though well-known this memorable attempt to dispel the clouds will bear repetition in full.

'A leader of the people, unsupported by any outward authority and a politician whose success rests not on craft nor upon the mastery of the technical devices, but simply on the convincing power of his personality, a victorious fighter who has always scorned the use of force, a man of wisdom and humility, armed with resolve and inflexible consistency, who has devoted all his strength to the uplifting of his people and betterment of their lot ; a man who has confronted the brutality of Europe with the dignity of the simple human being, and thus at all times risen superior.

Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth.'

For our generation who were contemporaries of these two immortals, Einstein's deep understanding of what Gandhi meant and his living sense of collaboration with Ahimsa as personified by Gandhi may be a lingering memory. Perhaps it may be useful, certainly it is not too soon in this Gandhi Centenary year to refresh this by recalling some aspects of Einstein's life and thought especially as his own Centenary will follow in 1979.

How central was Ahimsa to the thought of Einstein is best described by Robert Oppenheimer, himself a giant of atomic science and one of his closest colleagues.

"Einstein is rightly known as a man of very great goodwill and humanity. Indeed if I had to think of a single word for his attitude towards human problems, I would pick the Sanskrit word Ahimsa, not to hurt. He had also a deep distrust of

power.' Another close observer Antonia Valentina writes in her book—'He feels an increasing compassion even for human errors and has a tolerance like the serenity of the mystics.'

All this might well be written of Gandhi as well. Beside this dynamic Ahimsa, ii both a broad humanism, utterly oblivious of self is the main urge to action. Gandhi was committed to wipe every tear from every eye. Einstein said, 'For me the essence of religion is to be able to get under the skin of another human being, to rejoice in his joy and suffer in his pain.' Both felt an increasing identity with their fellow beings, the feeling of identity that creates revolutionaries and saints.

As Robert Oppenheimer writes: "In 1915, as he made the general theory of relativity, Europe was tearing itself to pieces and half losing its past. Einstein was always a pacifist. Only as the Nazis came into power in Germany, did he have some doubts, as his famous and rather deep exchange of letters with Freud showed.

He began to understand with melancholy and without true acceptance, that in addition to true understanding, man has sometimes a duty to act.

I need not say how luminous was his intelligence. He was almost wholly without sophistication and wholly without worldliness. Without power, without calculation, with none of the profoundly political humour that characterised Gandhi he nevertheless moved the world.'

Oppenheimer's scmming up does not stress the fact that Ahimsa was partly Gandhi's inescapable moral influence on the epoch whose presence Einstein as all other noble contemporaries of Gandhi appreciated even when they accepted it with some reservations.

In the Commemoration volume presented to Gandhi on his 70th birth-day, Einstein paid another significant tribute noted below.

"Gandhi is unique in political history. He has invented an entirely new and humane technique for the liberation struggle of an oppressed people and carried it out with the greatest energy and devotion. The moral influence he has

exercised upon thinking people through out the civilised world may be far more durable than would appear likely in our present age, with its exaggeration of brute force. For the work of statesman is permanent only in so far as they arouse and consolidate the moral forces of their peoples through their personal example and educating influence.

We are fortunate and should be grateful that fate has bestowed upon us so luminous a contemporary—a beacon to the generations to come.'

Not only did Einstein upheld this ideal of non-violence but he advocated its practice. When a teacher in Brooklyn N. Y. in May 1953 voicing his opposition to loyalty tests, wrote to him, Einstein published his reply—which stripped of its preliminaries read thus: "The problem with which we the intellectuals of this country are confronted is very serious. The reactionary politicians have managed to instil suspicion of all intellectual efforts into the public by dangling before their eyes a danger from without. Having succeeded so far they are proceeding to suppress the freedom of teaching.

What ought the minority of intellectuals to do against this evil? Frankly, I can see only the revolutionary way of non-cooperation in the sense of Gandhi's. Every one ought to refuse to testify and must be prepared to face jail and economic ruin. If enough people are ready to take this grave step they would be successful. If not they deserve nothing better than slavery which is intended for them."

Virgil G. Hinshaw in a well-documented article in Paul. A. Schilpp's well-known volume on Einstein, the philosopher-scientist writes: "With Gandhi, he would recommend passive resistance. But unlike a Gandhi, he believes in passive resistance only upto a certain point. He believes that one should resort to violence whenever militant Fascism arises and seeks to wipe out humanity's best.'

Einstein's conviction is epitomised by his following sayings:

"Our defence against the atom bomb is not in armaments but in law and moral order. I agree with Bernard Baruch that the whole problem is not of physics but of ethics.'

'It is easier to denature plutonium than it is to denature the evil spirit of man.'

'Concern for man himself and his fate must always form the chief interest of all scientific and technical endeavour.'

'Never do anything against conscience even if the state demands it.'

Strange but persistent rumours of communist leanings against Einstein stand disproved as baseless allegations in view of his insistence on freedom of conscience which necessarily differentiates his position from that of the communists. No doubt he hailed the October Revolution and characterised Lenin as a man 'who completely sacrificed himself and devoted all his energies to the realization of social justice.' But then, Gandhi also sometimes smilingly called himself a communist minus violence.

Gandhi's autobiography is deservedly well known and without any reticence and in utter truthfulness the broad facts of his life are stated up to a certain period of his life. Out of this life and the interpenetrated thought, his message is there for all who care to know.

Einstein's two autobiographical articles—one written for Paul. A. Schilpp's volume, 1949 and another written in 1955, a month before his death are essentially different and hardly autobiographical in the conventional sense.

Anticipating the surprised reaction he might provoke he explained, 'Is this supposed to be an obituary? I would like to reply, Essentially, Yes. For the essential in the being of a man of my type is what he thinks and how he thinks, not what he does or suffers.'

In his autobiographical note of 1949 he singles out from kaleidoscope of life events which make it part of the intellectual history of mankind. As has been rightly said 'Never before has scientific history merged more completely with a scientist's life.' But it is no part of our proposal in this sketch to note or comment on his scientific achievements.

Only his spiritual creed in the back-ground of his luminous life will be focussed in a brief outline to contrast it with Gandhi's and to indicate the fundamental unity despite the obvious diversity in training, equipment and upbringing, which urged both to free themselves from the chains of the merely personal, from an existence which is dominated by common cravings and primitive feelings. Einstein wrote in 1949 'Even when I was a fairly precocious youngman, the nothingness of the hopes and strivings which chases most men restlessly through life came to my consciousness with considerable vitality.... Out yonder was this huge world which exists independently of human beings and which stands before us like a great eternal riddle. Its inspection and contemplation beckoned like a liberation.'

This disengaging from the personal and the usual led to his utterly original way of seeing and explaining the universe after a supreme mental quest. In Gandhi's case, the escape from the merely personal and the transition to the super-personal was effected by deeds and not ideas, by self purification not contemplation. This self-purification was achieved by a series of experiments as a result of self-questionings. In the introduction to his autobiography, Gandhi makes it abundantly clear that his life consists of nothing but these experiments which he continued till the very end. Some of these were in the spiritual field and were known only to himself. So he hoped that a connected account would not be without benefit to the reader. Thus we have a glimpse into Gandhi's personality as integrated in one single pursuit of truth and this is possible as he keeps the door of his life open as a laboratory for experiments that are of enduring value to all humanity.' Not so did Einstein who screened from public gaze the inner recesses of his emotional development and only laid bare the intellectual and scientific side where the centre of gravity of his life was fixed. But at the root of both Gandhi's and Einstein's development was a profound impulse which has the same quality as religious fervour. It is therefore necessary to indicate how they found in the super-personal the calm and balance which they could not find in the narrow circles of

their personal lives. This total transference is Gandhi's religion and Einstein's cosmic consciousness.

Einstein felt no need of dogmas and was not adherent of any of the religious systems. To quote his own words, "My concept of God is an emotional conviction of a superior intellect manifested in the material world". He was neither an atheist nor an agnostic. On more than one occasion he has made clear his conviction that he believed "in Spinoza's God who reveals himself in the orderly harmony of what exists, not in a God who concerns himself with the fate and action of the humanity."

Einstein's concept of Cosmic consciousness is the superior intelligence which is manifested in the universe but the idea of a personal God was not acceptable to him. If carried to its logical conclusion, his theory would bring to mankind almost a scientific formula for monotheism and he might be called a Jnanyogi in the Vedantic tradition.

Gandhi very much believed in a personal God and did not disbelieve even idol-worship. As he said, 'An idol does not excite a feeling of veneration in me—but I think idolworship is part of human nature. We all hanker after symbolism.'

But Gandhi's religion can not be so easily summarised or compressed into such articles of faith.

Nor could it be confined to its more obvious personal aspects. He was a Hindu of Hindus and at the same time a rationalist Universalist in his spiritual make up.

The following quotations from his writings will make his awareness of the Cosmic consciousness evident.

'There is an indefinable mysterious power that pervades everything.' (Young India 11-10-28)

'I do not regard God as a person. Truth for me is God, and God's Law and God are not different.'

'God is an idea, Law himself.' Therefore it is impossible to conceive God as breaking the law.' (Harijan 23-3-40)

'God Himself has reserved no right of revision of His own Law and there is no need for Him for any such revision. He

is all-knowing. He has, therefore nothing to reconsider, nothing to alter.' (Young India 25-11-26)

In his autobiography, Gandhi sets forth his credo "What I want to achieve, what I have been striving to achieve is Self-realisation, to attain Moksha'.

In a wellknown article in Young India, "Neither a saint nor a politician" he explains his worldly activities thus:

'I have been experimenting with myself and my friends by introducing religion into politics.

Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not Hindu religion.

It is the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the Truth within which is the permanent element in human nature and which counts no costs too great to find full expression.'

This led to an attitude in life and to life not fundamentally different from Einstein's whose religion is the superior force that orientates our life and gives it superpersonal content.

The total transference in both from the fetters of our evershifting desires was differently achieved but at the core remains the insistence in both not to lead a disintegrated double life—where pulls are opposite.

To spiritualise all activities in pursuit of Truth, as it was given to him to know the Truth, was Gandhi's aim.

Thus he would bridge the gulf between his God and his life.

Having revolutionised scientific thought by his theory of relativity, Einstein also pursued what he felt to be Truth by engaging himself to find a 'General Field theory', (where all laws of creation are integrated).

On this borderland of vision of Adwaitam 'the feeling of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that all thinking and acting of human beings appear as its utterly pale reflection', became the guiding principle of his life and freed him from the shackles of an egocentric life.

Thus the great contemporaries met not in physical presence but in spirit.

GANDHI AND GREAT AMERICANS—A STUDY IN DEMOCRATIC HERITAGE

There have been great men who have in their lives and thoughts focussed the democratic heritage so much so that to describe them is also to describe the heritage. The perennial appeal of their personalities and the enduring freshness of their ideas justify the inclusion of Jefferson and Thoreau, Lincoln and Gandhi in this select category. All of them have been passionate and sincere champions of the 'right, freedom and dignity of man.'

In many parts of the world, admirers of Gandhi are commemorating this year the Centenary of this great Indian. The stimulus that Thoreau gave to Gandhi's thinking is well-known. His spiritual affinity with Jefferson and his considerable resemblance to Lincoln should also be stressed in face of threats to democratic values by trends towards totalitarianism in wide areas here and elsewhere.

While grappling with hard realities, our leaders might remind themselves of the legacy left by these great men whose ideas meet, cutting across barriers of space and time, of nationality and even ideology.

It is significant perhaps that even a confirmed dissenter Ho Chi Minh was anxious to get a copy of the Declaration of Independence of U.S.A. (drawn up by Jefferson) and the para 'All men are created equal' was inserted in the Vietnam charter almost verbatim.

It has been said that on the eve of the Revolution, the Americans had among themselves very little in common except a common faith and a common enemy. When independence came to America, it became evident that in and by the American Revolution, something far more than mere independence had been achieved. Jefferson nobly voiced this, saying :

'I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the minds of men.'

When independence came to India with democracy based on adult franchise, Gandhi was firm in his demand of social and economic changes to cure class antagonisms and group-rivalry. Not as a qualification but as an amplification of democratic principle, Gandhi demanded that political power should be dispersed and the nation should be built from the bottom on the basis of Sarvodaya.

He feared centralization of power, even if founded on a majority vote, and wanted the villagers to be the makers of their own destiny with only general rules laid down from above. Jefferson's ideas of political and economic decentralisation were fundamentally similar.

It must be pointed out that there were differences as there were similarities with the great Americans and genius is the product of the events of a country's history even as a ripe fruit is the product of its seed and soil. . . . Gandhi owed to his precursors and most to Thoreau but the system of religion and society to which he was born, made Gandhi unique despite the similarity.

Jefferson, despite his criticism of Christianity, was fundamentally religious but Gandhi's religion made him a politician, as he repeatedly stressed in saying :

'For me the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and there-through of humanity. . . I want to identify myself with everything that lives. My patriotism is for me a stage in my journey to land of eternal freedom and peace.'

There is no doubt that Jefferson's views on religion asserted in his famous statute of Religious Freedom would win Gandhi's willing concurrence, for the Father of the Indian nation was also the greatest champion of religious freedom in India—a secular state.

Fundamentally Jefferson was also a believer in non-violence but the impact of a raw revolution pushed men of his generation in camps other than that of the greater principle. As he wrote to the Earl of Buchan in 1803, 'My hope of preserving peace in our country is not founded on the greater

principle of non-resistance under every wrong but in the belief that a just and friendly conduct on my part will procure justice and friendship from others.'

Earlier he had written to Madison in 1797, 'In the whole animal kingdom I recollect no family but man, steadily and systematically employed in the destruction of itself.'

To Adams he wrote in 1822, 'The cannibals of Europe are going to eat one another. War between Russia and Turkey is like a battle of the kite and the snake, each destroys the other and leaves a destroyer less for the world.'

Gandhi wrote in the same way in 1945 about participants in the great war he witnessed :

'The war will end this year or the next. It will bring victory to the allies. The victory will be a prelude to a deadlier struggle, if any thing could be more deadly.'

But both were optimists at heart, Jefferson wrote to Adams, 'I shall not die without a hope that right and liberty are on a steady advance.'

Gandhi also believed and affirmed, 'I should work single-handed in the implicit faith that what I fail to make clear today shall be clear some day of itself.'

Thoreau had the profoundest influence on Gandhi who repeatedly acknowledged this. 'My first introduction to Thoreau was in 1907 when I was in the thick of the passive resistance struggle. Thoreau's essay, 'Civil Disobedience' left a deep impression on me. I translated a portion for the readers of the Indian Opinion, which I was then editing. The essay seemed so truthful and convincing that I felt the need of knowing more about Thoreau, and I have read his life, his Walden and his shorter essays with great pleasure and equal profit.' Rightly has it been said, 'Thoreau, who fed upon the literature of the Orient, returned in kind to the Orient, full measure.'

It is perhaps true that despite his fame, Thoreau's actual influence upon society of his own country is very nearly nil... The lesson he taught himself and hoped he might teach others is summed up in one word—Simplify. He disapproved of rail-

ways. He regretted the passing of the time when the world of nature was still virgin. He disliked the city where the presence of so many people must make human life very cheap. Thoreau's concept of the good life may seem incomplete to many, not however, to Gandhi.

The most striking instance of Thoreau's influence on the modern world was the use to which Gandhi put his ideas on Civil disobedience.

In his letter to the American people in 1942, Gandhi wrote, 'You have given me in Thoreau—a teacher who has through his essay on Civil Disobedience, furnished me with scientific confirmation of what I was doing.'

'The only obligation which I have the right to assume is to do at any time what I think right', said Thoreau and no doubt he would agree when Gandhi redefined this saying:

'An out and out civil resister simply ignores the authority of the state. He becomes an outlaw claiming to disregard every unmoral state law. This he does because and when, he finds the bodily freedom he seemingly enjoys to be an intolerable burden. He argues to himself that a state allows personal freedom only in so far as the citizen submits to its regulations. Submission to the state law is therefore the price a citizen pays for his personal liberty.'

The conviction of an abiding rectitude united them in their concept of the Right of Resistance. This called for the highest courage and the loftiest conception of freedom in both.

Perhaps Thoreau was more of an extreme idealist than a democrat but here his shadow spread over Gandhi.

But Emerson's eulogy on the occasion of the death of his friend and neighbour that no truer American existed than Thoreau is true because in his curious combination of realism and idealism and in his devotion to personal freedom—the epitomized certain well known facets of the American character.

Gandhi was also a practical idealist and only incidentally a political leader. The National movement in India, since

it came under his influence, was based on the premise that it was duty of the individual to non-cooperate with evil.

'His passionate concern, as Thoreau's passionate concern was with the individual and with the obstacles that prevented the individual from living the life of self-respect and liberty which Thoreau's conscience or Gandhi's inner voice wanted him to live.'

In extending his teacher's concept, to group and national resistance, Gandhi made the ethical position clear saying:

'The method of non-violent resistance is the clearest and safest, because, if the cause is not true, it is resisters and they alone who suffer....'

But there is no doubt at all that Thoreau would have agreed with Gandhi in declaring, '... Every man or woman, however, weak in body is the guardian of his or her self-respect and liberty. This defence avails though the whole world may be against the individual resister.'

Both showed in their writings how radical they could be in the best sense of the word.

Walden is a great criticism of Thoreau's contemporary society. More blunt and less artistic, Gandhi's Hind Swaraj is a challenge to the epoch for a total withdrawal from all artificiality, a theme common with Walden at the core.

Thoreau, the arch individualist reminded that it shall not profit man to gain the whole world if he loses his own soul.

Gandhi also believed that what is invaluable in the last resort, is the individual. His condition must be improved by individual as also by mass action. Hence he involved first groups and then masses of men in his experiments.

In Abraham Lincoln, 'the dignity of a great mind and heart that seeks for rightness in principle, fairness in act and beauty in utterance' are integrated, as later in Gandhi—because with both integrity was the soul of leadership.

'In both, this involved loyalty in triplicate,—loyalty to one's best self and the best one knows, loyalty to the cause and loyalty to the dream....Through Lincoln one senses democracy at

its noblest and in his great speeches, at Gettysburg and in the second Inaugural address, we listen to how the greatest soul that democracy has yet evolved 'would have us wage war and make peace.' They are imperishable possessions of us and hold aloft the torch of democracy above the darkness and din of meanness and blundering.

Gandhi's great speeches and writings have the same simplicity, sincerity and consciousness of great responsibility despite the fact that he had to use a foreign tongue.

Both were great leaders of men and both were uncorrupted. Both acted with malice toward none, with charity for all and with firmness in right as God enabled them to see the right.

'Slavery must die that the union might live' said Lincoln and the cause of human freedom was thenceforward bound up by destiny with the cause of the union. Gandhi also refused to condone by passivity the evil that he found first in South Africa and then in India. Both were not theoreticians but attained lucidity of expression due to great and clear thoughts.

'As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference is no democracy.' This condensed note of Lincoln was on an autograph. Tocqueville amplifies but can not better this in his thesis that the authority of no individual should be absolute, unlimited power. As he rightly said, 'Human beings are not competent to exercise it with discretion ; and God alone can be omnipotent, because His wisdom and justice are always equal to His power.' Tocqueville's conclusions about the system of democracy, its possibilities and limitations cannot be quoted here but his significant summing up is given. He wrote, 'There is no country in the world in which everything can be provided for by laws, or in which political institutions can prove a substitute for common sense and public morality.' With this Gandhi would agree but at the same time Gandhi felt that the heart of the democratic faith is in the dependency of the government upon the consent of the governed—'people must consent to the laws they must live by.'

Both Lincoln and Gandhi had earned their place among the great men of the earth, not simply as supreme leaders or as statesmen. Both held, 'Our defence is the preservation of the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, everywhere.' Both would demand the grand right of the people to be ruled by laws, which they themselves approved, —not by edicts of men over whom they had no control.

It is significant that even in death they not only achieved martyrdom after triumphant leadership but in their last few hours both busied themselves with 'extinguishing resentments in expectations of Harmony and union.'

REAFFIRMATION OF GANDHIAN VALUES

While he lived, Gandhiji was the keystone of the arch which was subject to so many stresses that many wondered how he stood it all. By the alchemy of his purposeful outlook and technique, not only incarceration but opposition from within and without was sublimated and transmuted to glorious gains. Poverty lost its sting when voluntarily welcomed. Prisons did not chain but release his creative forces. He mastered opposition organized on a vast scale by alien agents to demonstrate that those who want and work for radical changes in human conditions, cannot do it except by raising a ferment in society.

What is no less significant is that after he passed away and a number of years elapsed, though he left no sect, no creed and no cult, the ferment of his ideas leavens the mind of men who are receptive and strengthens the moral fibre of those who are willing to respond to his call.

In a special sense, Gandhism is the keystone of the new moral arch of this age of atoms. It is also subject to stresses of atom bombs but no buttress is needed for this arch. Whatever strength is in it, is the strength of spirit ; whatever truth is, is the truth applicable not only to India but to humanity as a whole. For Gandhiji's message was not for any country or community though he stressed aspects of Truth in relation to the problems he faced and this particular aspect may cease to have much significance as times and conditions change. Their basic structures remain as basic values.

So opinions may differ as to details but regarding fundamentals there is unanimity that deep in the consciousness of the thinking world, Gandhiji's values will not only endure but continue to affect life and human progress. The rigidity of the Orthodox Gandhian programme, however, has only an experimental value ; and this the Sarvaseva Sangh is conducting in an earnest fundamental way (they, however, admit that it has not passed its experimental stage). Vinoba is solving problems, dissolving contraries, and trying to read the riddle of

life in his hard and straight interpretation of Gandhiji's way of life—a way that seemed to have disappeared with Gandhiji.

Yet as Nehru reminds, "There may be different pictures, different emphasis and different aspects of that extraordinary personality and his technique." But if all, best entitled to speak on Gandhian values, do not speak with one voice, it is true nonetheless that all Gandhiji's thoughts and acts were founded on a scheme of basic values which may not be phrased in set terms approved by all but briefly enumerated as below :—

(1) Truth in relation to all our activities is the supreme end and the means to this end must equally ring true and be pure.

(2) For this true end and pure means—non-violence is not merely a theoretical idea but must be a practical programme.

Truth and non-violence—not on the individual scale as others used them but on a large mass scale in removing tensions and human barriers—release mighty forces for social justice and racial and economic equality without hatred and violence.

This belief in the efficacy of Truth and non-violence as universal solvents of all evil within and without must stimulate all the pilgrims in the quest of Truth, fearlessness, and non-violence.

The next important inspiration of his life was his instinctive sympathy with the common people. As Nehru so aptly pointed out, 'His ambition to wipe every tear from every eye is unlike the ambition of many great men who were his contemporaries whose ambition was to produce oceans of tears and blood, and in that way to solve the world's problem.'

(3) 'Gandhiji wanted people to be not only brave but fearless.' Long before four freedoms idea took shape, he considered fear as 'sin against the human spirit'—not only for individuals, but for groups and nations as well. According to him, the highest non-violence, that of the strong, is fearlessness because as Acharya Kripalani aptly pointed out, 'It is not prepared to take life but to offer its own as sacrifice.' For the utmost pursuit of this ideal, Gandhiji would go all out to the

limit of his thought even though people would laugh at what they called his fads. He had the last laugh over them.

(4) His sense of urgency—which Acharya Kripalani has pointed out also characterized the early Christians who thought that the Kingdom of Heaven was round the corner. It is this belief that made Christianity spread in the World. As they believed 'Kingdom of Heaven is at hand', so Gandhiji was also emphatic in his 'Now or Never' dynamism. 'Swaraj in one year' 'Do or Die' mark him out from others.

(5) Gandhiji's belief in the possibility of conversion. He knew that many great sinners in history had turned into great saints, because they had the capacity which when rightly directed resulted in the miracle of conversion and a new life.

His faith in a cause based on Truth, freedom, and righteousness made him so firm in his belief that moral revolution was possible and reconstruction of society feasible by conversion of social groups and even of nations.

To quote his great follower again, 'Our master taught us the ancient lesson of India, the lesson of *Ahimsā and Abhaya* and even we, small men built in a lesser mould, increased in stature thereby.'

(6) But though Gandhiji taught us many lessons, essentially he taught us to work and serve. He adhered in the fullest sense to his ideals and to his conception of truth. Yet he succeeded in moulding and moving so many human beings only by working steadfastly. As Bharatan Kumarappa says, 'Other great teachers only laid down principles but Gandhiji showed by example how in the light of these principles he would tackle the problems confronting us today. He thus reduced the ideal to the terms of the actual.'

(7) This must lead up to Gandhiji's emphasis on the dignity of human labour. As he himself wrote in his autobiography, 'Of the limited number of books I read, one that brought about an instantaneous and practical transformation in my life was Ruskin's *Unto this Last*, which I later translated into Gujarati entitling it *Sarvodaya*—(the Welfare of all).

'Some of my deepest convictions were reflected in it ; and the teachings of *Unto this Last* I understood to be

- (i) That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all ;
- (ii) That all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work ; and thus the lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's ; and
- (iii) That a life of labour is the life worth living.'

Along with this, Gandhiji's mind was attracted by Tolstoy's work on 'bread-labour', which insisted that man must earn his bread by working with his own hands. In Gandhiji's view, the same principle has been set forth in the third chapter of the *Gītā*, where we are told, that he who eats without offering sacrifice eats stolen food. According to Gandhiji, 'Sacrifice here can only mean bread-labour'.

Tied up to this view of bread-labour and dignity of labour is Gandhiji's condemnation of the existing economic and social system where men are encouraged to make money, save money, and have enough so that they may live without doing any productive work at all. The greatest honour may go to those who can afford the most conspicuous ostentation.

Veblen spoke of the kept classes and their vested interests and pointed out that though it is more usual to speak of them as the better classes, their place in the economic scheme of the civilized world is to consume the net surplus product of the country's industry over cost and so prevent a glut in the market. The common man may not afford to have more because he is helpless with the rules of the game as it is played in the twentieth century under the unenlightened principle of the eighteenth century that confers to vested interest a 'legitimate right to get something for nothing.'

This was a state of affairs that Gandhiji would not tolerate and so he said at the Round Table Conference: 'The Congress represents in its essence the dumb and semistarved millions scattered over the length and breadth of the land in its seven lakhs of villages. Every interest which is asking for protection has to subserve this interest, and if there is genuine and real

clash, I have no hesitation in saying that the Congress will sacrifice every interest for the sake of the interest of the dumb millions.'

Gandhiji accordingly held that each man should have the wherewithal to supply all his natural wants and no more. To bring this deal into being, the entire social order has got to be reconstructed. He further held that a society based on non-violence could not nurture any other ideal. 'We may not perhaps be able to realise the goal, but we must bear in mind and work unceasingly to realise it. Indeed at the root of this doctrine of equal distribution must lie that of the trusteeship of the wealthy for the superfluous wealth possessed by them. . . . If however the rich do not become the guardians of the poor in the true sense of the term, and the poor are more and more crushed, what is to be done? In trying to find out the solution of the riddle, I have lighted on non-violent non-co-operation and civil disobedience as the right and infallible means' (*Harijan*, 25 August, 1940).

(8) Mahatma Gandhi had naturally strong and definite views on industrialization which tends to concentration of wealth and monopoly. He was not against machines as such. He was against its indiscriminate use and multiplication. As he said in *Young India* (13 November, 1924) : 'What I object to is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such. My object is not to destroy the machine but to impose limitations to it.'

He is also for such machinery as saves individual labour and lightens the burden of millions of cottages. 'If we could have electricity in every village home, I shall not mind villagers plying their implements and tools with electricity' (*Harijan*, 22 June, 1935).

He thus desired that science should produce machines which people could use in their own homes, and not in big factories. Not a steel age but an atomic age with much cheaper energy supply at remote villages may make Gandhiji's dream come true. A villager can remain a villager and at the same time produce standardized articles and small things. Thus

Gandhiji wanted science to be servant of man and not his master.

Gandhiji however agreed that all group activity must be decentralized. According to him, the economic situation of India and for the matter of that, of the whole world should be such that 'None should suffer from want of food and clothing, and this ideal can be universally realised only if means of production of the elementary necessities of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be available as God's air and water are or ought to be. They should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. Their manipulation by any country, nation or group of nations would be unjust.'

Though these ideas are not familiar, they can be fitted into any advanced economy.

Gandhiji was always thinking of utilizing the 'billions of idle hours of the nation without disturbing the rest' and devised a productive system based on the people's own effort and under their own control and symbolized this by the spinning wheel.

He also advocated a network of decentralized industrial units to avoid urban concentration. It is interesting to note that even in a highly industrialized country like U.S.A there is a growing realization that urban industrialization may be a tragedy, and village communities are being nurtured as laboratories of rural survival (Earl Hitch, *Re-building Rural America*).

It is good to know that the latest Five Year Plan realizes and proposes that side by side with large scale industries there must be village industry as the only way of providing full employment for people in the countryside for those unemployed and under-employed. Even in more advanced and developed countries, it is being increasingly recognized that rural communities and their small-scale industries and business serve as 'cushions against economic shocks.'

(9) Gandhiji was against urban concentration and destruction of the community life of the villages. He had seen early in South Africa Indian workers huddled together as up-

rooted humanity to serve as indentured workers. He had noted the effect of industrialization and of industrial revolution there and in the slums of India. What J. L. and Barbara Hammond had so eloquently focussed in their book, *The Rise of Modern Industry*, had been deeply felt by Gandhiji in his own way when he found workers crowding the slums had been reduced to indigence and degraded as men. Most of all Gandhiji was hurt to find that the subsistence of life of the workers was in other men's hands. The drift to towns, cities and factories therefore had to be combated by him in his own way and so he devised his decentralized productive system, centred in villages.

This village society is meant to protect and cushion the family life as also the individual between the cradle and the grave by re-creating a cooperative community life. Here in this scheme men rely on one another's cooperation and not struggle for competition only. A sense of identity is generated by common endeavour in a community; and custom is the shield to protect and not to crush the weak, as also the solid mooring of an older way of life of intimacy possible only in a small village. However, the cardinal factors are self-reliance and self-sufficiency. Stressing the ancient Indian theme that 'you may be happy only when you are on your own', Gandhiji undoubtedly re-oriented and reaffirmed the need for a village-centred civilization. With this village bias, he framed his constructive programme first in 1941 and then in 1945 and even in his last will and testament he stresses this need of the village where society is just like a family and the relation between the individual and the society is of close inter-dependence. His plan of self-supporting education through village handicrafts is meant to link learning to doing and living and to develop villages so that a 'non-violent civilization may be built on self-contained villages' (*Harijan*, November 1939).

The village communities of ancient India, life in which was to a large extent spontaneously self-regulated made a near approach to Gandhian ideal of society. As he wrote in *Harijan* (13 June, 1940) : 'The nearest approach to civilization based upon non-violence is the erstwhile village republic of India.

I admit that it was very crude. I know there was in it no non-violence of my definition and conception but the germ was there.'

He further elaborated his idea in *Harijan* (28 July, 1946) where he writes :—

'In this structure composed of innumerable villages. . . life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. It will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals The outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it.'

Now for the realization of this ideal Gandhiji did not have much faith in external sanctions and depended more on inner sanctions ordinarily called conscience.

'The individual is the architect of his own Government', he used to say, and pointed out that social reform movements in Western World quarrelled mainly over the degree of public responsibility for individual welfare.

•He never proposed a 'Welfare State' where the Government governs most to serve best. He advocated a Government which governs not at all, and the society he contemplated consists of groups settled in villages 'in which voluntary co-operation is the condition of dignified and peaceful existence' (*Harijan*, 13 January, 1940).

Gandhiji presented his constructive programme which covered the following items :

1. Communal Unity, 2. Removal of untouchability, 3. Prohibition, 4. Khadi, 5. Other village industries such as hand-grinding, hand-pounding, paper-making, oil-pressing, etc., 6. Nai Talim—New or Basic Education, 7. Adult Education, 8. Women, 9. Education in health and Hygiene, 10. Provincial Language, 11. National Language, 12. Economic Equality—a master-key to non-violent society, 13. Kisans, 14. Labour, 15. Adivasis, 16. Lepers, 17. Students.

This list he calls illustrative and not exhaustive; and this constructive programme should be studied to understand in its

entirety the Gandhian Scheme of value underlying all his efforts. As he said, 'my handling of non-violent non-cooperation without the constructive programme will be like a paralysed hand attempting to lift a spoon.'

The ideal of plain living and high thinking inherent in this scheme of constructive programme need not be stressed. It is obviously axiomatic in Gandhiji's thought and life, though challenged by many economists who point out that the mass mind has 'reacted to the economic environment of the village with ignorance, superstition and inert fatalism'. 'Rare individuals endowed with exceptional liveliness of mind, have turned to speculative activity which has been predominantly abstract, metaphysical and other worldly.' The assumption is that man cannot outgrow his environment except in an ostentatious way of life, where his needs are served by others. Like the lilies of the Biblical imagery, only when they neither toil nor spin, can they emerge in full glory.

It can only be stressed that even in plain surroundings man can outgrow his environment and lead intensely practical, vital, and purposeful lives. The examples of Gandhiji and Vinoba need not be emphasized but many of his other followers also give the lie to the ultra-modern challenge to the Gandhian way of life and thought.

Now it has been said that the deterioration of human being is not the result of large-scale production but its capitalistic organization. It is said that the concentration of the means of production required for large-scale industry has led to civic integration in urban areas, and a unique development of culture. It is also said that to secure greater leisure means nothing more than to be able to accomplish our material tasks with less labour and release time and energy in an increasing measure for activities of the intellect and spirit.

This postulates an enthusiastic welcome of leisure, progress, and specialization and to none of these would Gandhiji attach too much importance. He would have only so much of leisure as is consistent with an intelligent approach to work, would have nothing to do with progress if it is synonymous

with materialism and would discount specialization, as he doubts 'whether the steel age is an advance on the flint age'. He whole-heartedly detests what he calls 'the mad desire to destroy distance and time, to increase animal appetites and go to the ends of the earth in search of their satisfaction' (*Young India*, Vol. III, p. 120).

Specialization and centralization, according to him, are incompatible with an ideal state of society as both make for arrogance, intellectual and otherwise. So he says, 'if India is to evolve along non-violent lines, it will have to decentralise many things. Centralization cannot be defended without adequate force.'

This made him afraid of an increase in the power of the State, 'because although apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all real progress. We know of so many cases where men have adopted trusteeship but none where the State has really held power only for the poor.' (N. K. Bose, *Studies in Gandhism*, pp. 202-04).

In his view, State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul but the State is a soul-less machine and it 'can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence.'

Gandhiji knew the fundamental truth that society is a stronger continuing and cementing force than the State and he early discovered that in India, village community and rural society made for unity in diversity that was India with her many States, languages, and religions.

In *Swadeshi Samaj* Rabindranath Tagore also showed how it was not a political tie but social links that made Indian unity a live factor in the past and how necessary it was to forge these links in the chain so that Indian unity through rural society and village economy may again emerge. The king pin, of course, in both is the individual, the common man; and so Gandhiji proposed the self-regulated society where 'the individual rules himself in a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour', all human barrier vanishing with the growth of human approach. Gandhiji rejects alike the unrestrained

individualism that ignores social obligations as well as the other extreme which regards the individual as a mere cog in the social machine. 'I value individual freedom, but you must not forget that man is a social being. He has risen to the present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. We have to learn to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint.

'Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society, enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member.' (*Harijan*, 27 May, 1939).

It will be seen that some of these Gandhian values admit of no controversy but there are others such as his assessment of the functions of State, machine, decentralization, and large-scale industrialization, which provoke a challenge as well as thought from many who would be willing to subscribe to his re-affirmation of everlasting values of Truth, fearlessness, and non-violence.

Even then it is interesting to note that concentration of power in the State and large-scale mechanized industry are losing more and more their champions in theory in the realm of ideas though they are gaining ground in places. World forces are compelling reconsideration of old and established practices and current ideas about economic development and the plan and programme of production of the future may depend less and less on giant undertakings and more and more on ultra-economic forces.

Gandhian emphasis on decentralization, trusteeship and constructive work have found echoes even in the advanced U.S.A. where the latest development is to view the labour-management role as mutual trusteeship and where integration of urban and rural economy is being more and more stressed as 'cushion against economic shocks'.

Aruthur Morgan is engaged in his remarkable experiments in his laboratory of rural survival in his community service centre at Yellow Springs, Ohio and Prof. Borsodi in his 'School of Living' near New York. All over the East experiments in small-scale and cottage industries are being made as

the only way of providing full employment to people in under-developed areas. Industrial cooperatives are developing village industries of Gandhian type and though the orthodox *charkha* and *khadi* are not being copied, Gandhiji's teachings in rural economics are being studied and followed in spirit though not in letter.

Even the Scandinavian States and Russia are dispersing industries and attempting experiments in decentralization and reconstruction in the context of their own traditions and resources.

A cooperative life of common endeavour is again looming large in all planning, and economists are now increasingly aware that though a man's work may mean little, when multiplied by a million, may become very big.

It has been said that 'class struggle is nothing else than the struggle for surplus-produce i.e what the worker produces above the necessities of his own subsistence (necessary produce). He who owns this surplus is the master of the situation—owns wealth, owns the State, holds the key to the Church and the Courts.' Gandhiji would nip this capitalist evil in its bud, he would never subordinate means to his end. He would not apply wrong means even for an end he considered right.

So he would not mitigate the evil of capitalism by abolishing it but convert it into a completely decentralized economy based on his idea of trusteeship.

From the Report of Royal Commission (Barlow Commission) on the distribution of Industrial population 1940 and report on the land utilization in rural areas (1942—Scott Committee) we find that the change-over to the idea of decentralized growth is gaining ground even in U.K. Garden Cities and project villages with extensions of light industries are being appreciated more and more and though the basic industries are still concentrated in a big way, (which Gandhiji was also prepared to concede) the light industries are being decentralized and dispersed to absorb idle labour in rural areas. All over the thinking world, people are awakening to the evil of the commercialized outlook on life, whereby an individual is judged more in terms of what he has than what he is. More and more it is being realized that there is no wealth but life,

that country is richest which nourishes the greatest number of happy human beings; that man is richest who having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest helpful influence, both personal and by means of possessions over the life of others.

Most of all, the 'lone human being, not a unit in the mass but the distinctive individual' is being re-discovered not by Gandhians alone but other intellectuals. It is also becoming clear to this minority that human civilization must be built from the bottom with an apex perhaps at its peak, but broad-based with the aim to achieve the greatest good of all (i.e. Sarvodaya), if we are to face the big question of what we ought to do with our lives beset with so many evils.

Albert Einstein wrote in a famous letter (when he advocated the Gandhian way of non-cooperation in fighting U.S. inquisition):

'The problem with which the intellectual of this country is confronted is very serious . . . what ought the minority do against any rising tide of evil? I can frankly see only the revolutionary way of non-cooperation in the sense of Gandhi.'

So the Gandhian values and techniques are reasserting themselves in strange context. These techniques were never meant to be absolute though values are perennial. As Gandhiji himself said, 'Techniques are relative things. They are relative to the objective that you want to achieve.' So when he chose *charkha* as his technique he was attracted to the most urgent problem of Indian Economy not by way of a primitive obsession but as the remedy desired by a rational and practical man. In other contexts, he, a master revolutionary, might even discard *charkha* though never the values that *charkha* represented.

Whether Gandhian ideals and values will succeed or not in bringing about a better world order and a higher civilization remains to be seen. But this much is certain that in due course the present order will melt away in the ferment raised by many forces, among which Gandhian ideas are not the least enduring nor the least effective.

MAHATMA GANDHI & HINDU TRADITION

In approaching Gandhiji as a philosopher, sage and seeker of Truth alone, to the exclusion of his dominant and dynamic personality as a politician and social reformer, there is always the risk of doing injustice to the man and distorting his work. But a vast subject can, in the nature of things, lend itself only to a partial treatment, and it is a strange paradox and yet nothing more than the obvious truth that the ideas of Gandhiji have an appeal more universal than his actions. Besides though philosophy proceeds in his case on the facts of experience, there is no need to illustrate it—all the facts being so very well known.

The question is often raised to what extent Gandhiji's thought and philosophy borrowed its ideas from the background of Hindu religion and Indian philosophy. In this connection Gandhiji's article on Hinduism in *Young India* of the 6th October, 1921, at once proposes an answer and provokes a discussion: "My belief in Hindu religious scriptures does not require me to accept as divinely inspired every word and every verse. Nor do I claim to have any first-hand knowledge of all these wonderful books. But I do claim to know and feel the truths of the essential teachings of the scriptures. But I decline to be bound by any interpretation, however learned it may be, if it is repugnant to reason and moral sense".

Gandhiji's words are specially significant as indicating his profound insight into the spirit of Hindu scriptures as well as of Hindu philosophy. For philosophy of India is essentially spiritual, and fundamentally the history of both Hindu religion and philosophy illustrates, in the words of Prof. Radhakrishnan, "the endless quest of the mind for Truth against untruth, for right against wrong, and if I may say so, for redeeming light against baffling darkness". Gandhiji very wisely stresses the spirit as against the letter, yet the Pundit often plods to put it all wrong. Therefore Gandhiji protests against the perverse interpretation and insists. "Like the watch the heart needs the winding of purity, and the head of reason, or the

dweller ceases to speak." From this angle of vision Gandhiji has imbibed the mighty purpose which is also the end of all Hindu religious endeavour, namely, to seek truth against error. He may have blundered at times, as he himself was the first to admit, but he did what he felt able and called on to do. His whole life he calls an experiment in Truth and a spiritual motive dominates it all along, and in this he falls in a line with the essential Hindu character at the peak of its splendour.

Coming now to details we find Gandhiji has been a profound student of the *Gita*, and has contributed several illuminating articles on it. He has felt that the *Gita* has ceased to be a working hypothesis of human conduct, adapted to different stages of spiritual development and different conditions of life as it was meant to be and has tried to enunciate its principles anew as he realized them in life and thought. We must observe that in this also he has followed the traditionally accepted method of the great Indian sages who have all interpreted the *Gita* to establish their own special standpoints. We know how again and again when the traditionally accepted beliefs became inadequate, nay false, on account of the changed times, and the age grew impatient with them, the insight of a new teacher supervened, stirring the depths of spiritual life. In his *History of Indian Philosophy* Prof. Radhakrishnan has called these "great moments of Hindu thought, times of inward testing and vision, when at the summons of the spirit's breath, blowing where it listeth and coming whence no one knows, the soul of man makes a fresh start and goes forth on a new venture." Gandhiji's annotation of the *Gita* in the light of *ahimsa* has stressed the intimate relation between the truth of philosophy and the daily life and thought of the people as he tried to mould them with equal significance.

Yet he is the first to testify to the supreme lesson of that part of the *Gita* over which controversial interpretation has not left its dust. In his article on the meaning of the *Gita* he writes. "The last 19 verses of the second chapter have been inscribed on the tablet of my heart. They contain for me all knowledge—the truth they teach are the eternal verities. There is reasoning in them but they represent realised knowledge".

But while going so far, he is none the less true to his own sheet anchor of *ahimsa*. His enunciation of the meaning of the *Gita* gives out what he has felt in his heart of hearts after profound self-enquiry, which has been in his case equally profound self-effacement. "Self-realisation and its means is the theme of the *Gita*, the fight between the two armies being taken as the occasion to expound the theme. You might, if you like, say that the poet himself was not against war or violence, and he did not hesitate to press the occasion of war into service. But a reading of the *Mahabharata* has given me an altogether different impression". Thus Gandhiji has worked for a rational synthesis which goes on gathering into itself new yet age-old conceptions as the age progresses.

Nor is his own contribution of *ahimsa* simply a reorientation of the old Jaina creed. It is an all comprehensive mode of living with the wider implications of non-violence, yet as he has made it clear, it is not non-violence at any cost. He explained in two articles on the 23rd February, 1922, and 25th August, 1920, how he accepted the interpretation of *ahimsa*, not merely as a negative state of harmlessness but as a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer. But he says, "It does not mean helping the evil-doer to continue the wrong or tolerating it by passive acquiescence. On the contrary, love, the active state of *ahimsa*, requires you to resist the wrong-doer by dissociating yourself from him even though it may offend him or injure him physically." Thus Gandhiji, like all great sages, has felt that the ultimate truths are the truth of the spirit and he has felt the call to ask not only his countrymen but all who will see and seek, to refine life in the light of these truths.

Above all, the interest of Hindu religion and philosophy is the *self* of man, and often the Hindu sage shuts out the rush of the fleeting events engaging the mind to enable the vision to turn inward and know the self. "*Atmanam viddhi*" has been the law of the prophets and Gandhiji has not failed to fall in here with the main current of his ancestral religion. In his article on *My Mission* (3-4-24) he has boldly stated, "I am a humble seeker of Truth. I am impatient to realize myself, to attain

moksha (salvation by self-realisation) in this very existence. My national service is part of my training for freeing my soul from the bondage of the flesh. Thus considered, my service may be regarded as purely selfish. I have no desire for the perishable kingdom of earth. I am striving for the kingdom of Heaven which is *moksha*". His religion is the dominant note of his life, and this most unselfish of men is selfish in so far as he prizes his own salvation above every thing else.

Yet there is hardly any conflict, because this higher self is only selflessness transmuted. On our dead selves we rise to this elevation. In his own inimitable words, "when I say that I prize my own salvation above everything else, above the salvation of India, it does not mean that my personal salvation requires a sacrifice of India's political or any other salvation. But it implies necessarily that the two go together. Just in the same sense, I would decline to gain India's freedom at the cost of non-violence, meaning that India will never gain her freedom without non-violence or through violence. That I may be hopelessly wrong in holding this view is another matter, but such is my view and it is daily growing on me".

Speaking at the Madras Rotary Club, in 1938 Prof. Radhakrishnan explained the standpoint of Gandhiji's absolute adherence to non-violence by stating that he was a free and true intellectual who had verily shaken himself absolutely free from national prejudices and psychological environments. This is so far true, as the seeker for Truth cannot allow these to obscure his vision. But the point will bear further elucidation as Gandhiji himself has provided some clue to its solution. And this, while stressing his personal religious leanings, goes to show that he is not adrift from the cultural background of his ancestral faith. Nobody questions his supreme gift of intellect; yet when his intellect is weighed in the scale against his religion, nobody can have any doubt. As Prof. Radhakrishnan has himself said elsewhere, "Religion in India stimulates the philosophic spirit". In the case of Gandhiji, it has not only stimulated his philosophic spirit, but his intellect, politics and every minute phase of daily life. At the risk of labouring the point, the following quotation from

Young India (12-5-20) on *Neither a Saint nor a Politician* must be reproduced : "The politician in me has never dominated a single decision of mine, and if I take part in politics it is only because politics encircle us to-day like the coil of a snake, from which one cannot go out, no matter how much one tries. In order to wrestle with this snake, I have been experimenting with myself and my friends in politics by introducing religion into politics. Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is certainly not the Hindu religion which I prize above all other religions but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature which binds one indissolubly to the truth within, and which ever purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found its Maker, and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself".

No doubt Gandhiji indicated by the religion transcending Hinduism the very essence of Hinduism, that eternal Being of God which pervades Hinduism through and through.

But the inward significance of the above passage is missed unless we appreciate the experiment with truth that is implicit in the experiment of introducing religion into politics. Apparently here Gandhiji has a break with the tradition of great sages. Yet it is not so. The Indian tradition ever sought a close communion between theory and daily practice. Doctrine and life, life and theory, in the vital period of Hindu culture, were not separate. Thus often enough, philosophy became a way of life, mode of living, an approach to spiritual realization. It is often said that in Gandhiji's case the influence of Christ, and Tolstoy and Mohammed mattered immensely, bridging the gap between theory and practice, doctrine and reality, and between ideal and its endeavour. Gandhiji's own writings admit his profound debt to these teachers. When it was said that Jesus never dabbled in politics, Gandhiji explained thus, "Jesus was a prince of politicians, only the politics of his time consisted in securing the welfare of the people by teaching them not to be seduced by the trinkets of priests and pharisees. No doubt he rendered unto Caesar what was Caesar's. But to-

day the system of government is so devised as to affect every department of our life. If therefore we want to conserve the welfare of the nation, we must religiously interest ourselves in the doings of the governors and exert a moral influence on them by insisting on their obeying the laws of morality". A more profound apologia of a saint turning politician can hardly be given, and this holds good when the comparison is with Mohammed. No doubt Gandhiji received inspiration from Jesus and also to a certain extent from Mohammed; but if his philosophy and life are the same thing, he does not therein depart from the Hindu tradition. None need say that the Hindu sages led away men from life in its usual aspects and called them to renunciation alone. Renunciation has been inculcated no doubt, and so has Gandhiji done in keeping renunciation in the forefront of his philosophy. "Highest fulfilment of religion requires a giving up of all possession," he has said.

But equally true has been his understanding of the spirit behind the conception of giving up. As he writes with deep penetration in *My Mission*, "To attain my end of *moksha*, it is not necessary for me to seek the shelter of a cave. I carry one about me if I would but know it. A cave dweller can build castles in the air whereas a dweller in a palace like Janak has no castles to build. For me, the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and thoroughness of humanity. I want to identify myself with everything that lives."

Revitalized though the last line is by the context of it and the personal accent of the man himself, it reads like a translated verse of the *Upanishads*. And this is the dominant and recurring note: "It will be seen that for me there are no politics devoid of religion. They subserve religion."

This intense religious motif has been in a way—the secret of Mahatmaji's unparalleled success with the masses, for the average Indian, Hindu or Musalman, always stands to attention when the call comes in the name of religion and truth. What is most tragic is that it is exactly this spiritualizing touch which has erected a barrier and separated Mahatmaji from

some of the intelligentsia. The most intimate of his sophisticated colleagues feels a little out of element in his presence ; it is, as it were, a seed of loneliness in a bed of intimacy. Some of the intelligentsia have responded no doubt, but by far the larger majority who want cent. per cent. undiluted politics seek refuge in expediency and policy, and their glib political persiflage cripple the greatness of their leader. Thus though Gandhiji himself would recognize no distinction between ideal and practice, the fullest knowledge and its most intense action, critics try to justify a sliding down the scale by suggesting that the "one flaw in Mahatmaji's politics is the assumption that a formal acceptance of a principle by anybody requires the practical application of the principle at all times". Yet his whole life, which he has placed as an open book, has been an attempt to bridge the gulf. This apotheosis of the daily life, this rising to a plane of consciousness from which he can bring the Divine down into material body and physical life as well as into the mind, the heart and the soul, mark Gandhiji out as a great seeker of Truth and God, and equally well, this points him out as a great exponent of traditional Hindu method of *Karma-yoga*.

For this absolute surrender to divine intervention in everyday material life, this melting life into a new whole, this utter self-effacement for the realization of self, has been the keynote of the *Gita's Karma-yoga* and Gandhiji has been its most persistent practitioner. He wrote himself, "Acceptance of a creed ultimately involves practice in accordance with it". In his own life, there has been a demonstration of the principles laid down in the 2nd chapter of the *Gita*, which he has accepted as the canon of his life.

His fasts undertaken for asserting spirit's supremacy over flesh are recognized Hindu methods of purification. They show that he is a *Sadhaka*, a *Bhakta*, a *Tapasvi* no less than a politician, social reformer and philosopher. So also his crusade against untouchability is the result of his burning zeal for pure Hinduism. As he wrote in *Young India* of 24th April, 1924. "If untouchability was a part of the Hindu creed, I should

decline to call myself a Hindu, and most decidedly embrace some other faith if it satisfied my highest aspirations".

All along his life, he has tried to satisfy these aspirations after Truth, and made attempts to know it wherever lay the chance. His deep and reverent study of Christian and Muslim theology are instances in point. But after his own attempts and attempts of others to enlighten him, Gandhiji came to accept the Hindu creed, which came to mean for him "a relentless pursuit of Truth through non-violent means". As he deliberately stated to the missionaries on the 6th August, 1925, "To-day my position is that though I admire much in Christianity, I am unable to identify myself with orthodox Christianity. I must tell you in all humility that Hinduism, as I know it, entirely satisfies my soul." So also he never hesitated to own the indissoluble bond which bound him to Hinduism. "She is like my wife and moves me as no other woman in the world can" is his final summing up. Gandhiji however is never remiss in professing his debt to Jesus, to Mohammed and to Tolstoy in many ways. Not only that, he is eager to show that in his own life, he does not depart from their traditions. But there is a method after all in his spiritual leanings, and this may be said to be the Hindu method.

He is meek and humble as the most pious of Christians. Yet the idea of original sin is repugnant to Gandhiji though he is enough of a Vaishnava to call himself a sinner whose greatest ambition is to reach the ideal of Brahmacharya. This stress on perfect continence again is another link binding him to the great society of Hindu *Sannyasins*.

India has witnessed saints whose religious and intellectual impulses were not confined to philosophy and theology but extended over logic and grammar, rhetoric and language, and in fact all arts and sciences. Similarly with Mahatmaji everything useful to life or interesting to mind becomes an object of enquiry and criticism. The comprehensive character of the intellectual range of Gandhiji's mind will be felt if we mention such themes as birth-control and vivisection at one extreme and the use of rick-shaw and sewing machines at the other.

Here as elsewhere whatever he has touched, he has illumined with his intellect.

In fact so powerful is the play of his intellect and analytic mind, that there is a risk of losing sight of his synthetic and speculative, mind. Yet the greater glory is always there. His first approach is always with reason to the critical intellect which finds in his propositions a powerful stimulant. Then suddenly he seems to dip down the deeper layers of our being, and like all *Hindu* sages and mystics gives us a revealing vision and lifts us bodily as it were to a higher plane of consciousness.

Hence we hear Mahatma Gandhi speaking often as the *Hindu* sage, that is, the man "who applies and seeks in prctical life such guiding rules as may enable the individual to reach through an integral development of his whole being—an ever wider, ever fuller unfoldment".

GANDHIJI AND HIS QUEST OF TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE

A NEW DIMENSION OF SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION

Gandhiji was a witness of the scientific revolution that ushered in the nuclear age. It was a time of great expectations and perhaps greater apprehensions. Many rightly foresaw the end of a period of energy shortage which had haunted the world since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.

As one chairman of the U.S.A. Atomic Energy Commission affirmed,

‘As nuclear power technology progresses, I believe we can provide in the future enough energy for all the peoples of the world—the energy that is central to the banishment of hunger, poverty and fear of the future’.

However with the first release of atomic energy, it was clear, that international safeguards and controls would be necessary for the safety of mankind.

Gandhiji was deeply conscious of the dangers of a deadlier war and when he restarted the Harijan in February 1946—he wrote on 2-2-46, ‘Has the atom bomb exploded my faith in truth and non-violence? Not only has it not done so but it has clearly demonstrated to me that the twins constitute the mightiest force in the world. Before it, the atom bomb is of no effect.’

Gandhi in posing soul force against nuclear force continues, ‘In saying this. . . ., I merely bear witness to the fact that this force resides in everybody, man woman and child. Only in many it lies dormant but it is capable of being awakened by judicious training. It is further to be observed that without the recognition of this truth and due effort to realise it there is no escape from self-destruction. The remedy lies in every individual training himself irrespective of response by the neighbours.’

Now what is this training which Gandhiji envisages ?

He sets a shining example of this in his life, in his experiments with Truth and investigations in the spiritual realm. But he also suggested that specialists be chosen 'to study the inwardness of the movement of Satyagraha.'

Inviting the War-Resisters' Conference to set apart a week in 1949, he pleaded,

'Let the specialists come to India with an open mind and in a spirit of humility as befits a searcher after Truth.'

The original plan was a heart to heart talk with the seekers after peace, the Pacifists and specialists, and even upto 1917, it was his hope that by 1949 when the conference was due, he would be able to enlist world-opinion in favour of a proposition which was not only self-proved to the initiated, but which, he hoped would be abundantly proved by the demonstration of the efficacy of non-violence of the strong in India.

To that end, Gandhiji was educating public opinion in India and by his life and action, he emphasised the overpowering force of Love and Ahimsa in solving India's many problems as also the overall problems of world-peace, till a fanatic in his fury put an end to it.

The Pacifists and specialists met in 1949, December in Sheogaon and Santiniketan in India but without his guidance. This band of seekers, Foreign and Indian, while missing his presence did not have easy or obvious replies to their problems.

The first conference of the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO therefore adopted at its meeting in 1949 a resolution,

(1) that a committee be appointed to initiate, direct and stimulate in cooperation with other bodies with similar aims the study of the ideas and technique expounded by Gandhi ;

(2) that, in the light of these studies, a world-wide programme of action to promote universal peace and good-will among all nations should be prepared for consideration.

It soon became clear that it was beyond the capacity of any national body to frame such a world-wide programme of action. Organisation of seminars with foreign as well as Indian participants for a closer study of Gandhian principles appeared to be more fruitful. A Seminar was held in New Delhi in January 1953 and had as its main topic for discussion the contribution of Gandhian outlook and techniques to the solution of tensions within and among nations.

Mostly distinguished statesmen and humanist scholars attended as also Dr Alva Myrdal a sociologist on behalf of UNESCO.

It is significant, however, that all the seminars so far held, attracted wide interest mainly from scholars, humanists and social-workers and no attempt was made to invite scientists who were at most distant admirers if not mere observers.

It is just as well that it has been realised at last on the occasion of the Centenary celebrations by Gandhiji's own Vidyapith, founded by him in 1920, that scientists can not be left out.

It is now generally accepted that humanities and literature must step down from their place in the scheme of our chaotic and democratic systems of education and politics. It is also commonly held that science and not mere generalised culture should supply the skill and leadership which are necessary for an age committed to truth, material practicality and far-reaching consequences of nuclear energy.

Science is thus a powerful determinant of man's future. But Gandhian thought may be another basic factor in moulding that future and there is considerable scope for interaction between science in this nuclear age and Satyagraha as redefined in the Gandhian epoch.

So science and humanism must have their outlook determined by the interaction of their complementary forces and political policy should be guided by scientists with the knowledge of the physical as well as the spiritual sphere.

When a scientist of the eminence of Heisenberg says that Gandhi's way of thinking can lead directly into the political

structure of a future world in which a nation may be better protected by not possessing atomic weapons, he indicates the type of scientist statesman who could provide leadership. But despite great admirers among scientists like Einstein, the common scientist has yet to be persuaded that the threat of war can be removed only by applying universally Gandhiji's principles of non-violence. It is fortunate that Gandhiji speaks in a way that scientists may find it easy to understand. His words concise, precise and direct have the accent of his age and any-body can feel that here is a man speaking to men,—all men, everywhere, today and forever. These words bring men together. When he says 'I have grown from truth to truth' he posits a common area of agreement with scientists.

Again Science is interested in discovering the Truth. So is Gandhiji but it is not Truth or Reality behind the Phenomenal, physical world but the Ultimate Reality behind all. For both it is an eternal or never ending quest after an ever-receding goal.

Another common bond which scientists can appreciate is his primary urge for discovery in fields as remote as Charkha and fasting, diet and nature cure, sanitation and sex, labour relations and international relations.

Bertrand de Jouvenal once observed; 'No one can be a scientist who is not driven by an urge for discovery....The spirit of the quest is essential to the making of a scientist and forms a bond between scientists.'

Though Gandhiji never stood on the pedestal of science, he had in the fullest measure the scientist's eagerness to seek Truth.

But he had not only the urge to know but the urge to live it and thus he was not only a pure scientist of Truth but a technologist and researcher who applied this knowledge to a wide variety of spiritual, ethical and human wants and needs ranging all the way from Moksha or liberation to village sanitation, all in the framework of Sarvodaya.

He was thus imbued with the spirit of science double-distilled and was one of the relatively few who in the midst

of human affairs courageously, honestly and intelligently came to conclusions based on reason and conscience which to him was the voice of God or inner voice of Reality.

In the spirit of a true scientist, he did not regard his own or other people's interests and having come to conclusions stated them fairly and acted accordingly.

This is the essential Gandhi whom any essential scientist would love to appraise.

Again most scientists are not impatient to see if something can be done and inclined to think that it can be done until it is proved otherwise. Gandhi discovered truth which although not new (truth can never be new) was new to the world of his day. When he found himself in error in even the smallest detail, he took every possible care to correct that error and let it be known that he was doing so. This is the scientific method.

When Gandhiji said, 'All I have done is to try experiments in Truth and Nonviolence on as vast a scale as I could. In doing so I have sometimes made errors and learnt by my errors. Life and its problems thus become to me so many experiments in the practice of Truth and non-violence.'—he acted as a genuine man of science would with similar experiments and with a similar readiness to learn by his mistakes. Karl Pearson in his Grammar of Science postulates, (1) impartial analysis of facts, (2) recognition of their relationship, (3) formation of judgments freed from individual bias—as some of the attributes of a scientific discipline. This conforms to the pattern of what Gandhiji wrote in 1942,—'It is not necessary to believe in an extra-mundane power called God in order to sustain our faith in Ahimsa (Love and non-violence). There are many powers lying hidden in us and we discover them by constant struggle and experiments. This Love is called cohesion or attraction in scientific language. It binds us to one another and to God. Ahimsa and Love are one and the same thing.' (Quoted from a private letter by Sophia Wadia).

Gandhiji quite often used such scientific words and comparison with scientific methods to illustrate his own ideas.

'I am a seeker after truth. I claim to have found a way to it. I claim to have made and am making ceaseless efforts to find it....But I admit that I have not found it yet.

What then is Truth? A difficult question, but I have solved it for myself by saying that it is what the voice within tells you.Just as for scientific experiments there is an indispensable scientific course of instruction in the same way strict preliminary discipline is necessary to qualify a person to make experiments in spiritual realm. Every one should, therefore, realize his limitations before he speaks of his inner Voice.'

As a statement, this would be appreciated by scientists like Einstein or Alexis Carrel. Of course Gandhiji had faith in God and a profound religious feeling imbued all his ideas and acts.

What Einstein said is very significant to scientists. Speaking of the religious spirit of science in 1934, he said, 'You will hardly find one among the profounder sort of scientific minds without a religious feeling of his own. This feeling is the guiding principle of his life and work in so far as he succeeds in keeping himself from the shackles of selfish desires. It is beyond question closely akin to that which has possessed religious geniuses of all ages.'

So Gandhiji's religion and faith in God need not devalue his ideas, methods and acts in the eyes of scientists in this age of scientific and technological revolution.

That Gandhiji would like specialists and scientists to imbibe his ideas and enlist their efforts for a non-violent revolution can hardly be questioned. He would always speak of his experiments and his great autobiography is titled—My Experiments with Truth. He always insisted that he had no creed or ism to shape the future or the new world of Sarvodaya which was his dream.

'My life is my message' and in the series of experiments, he carried on research as a spiritual scientist. Mystically inclined by tradition, he had a scientist's faith that man's unique characteristic among animals is the ability to direct and control his own evolution. While scientists held that science is the

most powerful tool for doing so, Gandhiji would draw also on spiritual and moral resources.

His experiments with himself in sublimating his passion and preoccupation with problems of sex and psyche would merit study of future psychologists. His researches in labour relations in Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association, which he called his laboratory will also deserve more attention of specialists.

On the occasion of the Seminar, the scientists should therefore place themselves beyond the specialness of the interest of their own subjects of study and see what they can do to mould the psycho-social evolution. Our ape like ancestors managed to make crude weapons and tools. In the Gandhian epoch in the nuclear age with the potentiality that has become global and extra-terrestrial in scope, what sort of arrangements, social, economic and spiritual will evoke the needed response so that human civilisation and the amphibious being on the borderline between the animal and the spiritual may survive?

Of course the scientist has his own limitations. He feels that knowledge of "what is" does not open the door to "what should be". Here we face the limits of the purely rational conception of our existence. But Gandhiji has the approach of a spiritual seeker who points to the crude weapons of the the primitive man, and subsequent discoveries of gun-powder, dynamite and the amazing discovery of the atom bomb and maintains that far more 'undreamt and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field of non-violence.'

Of course a beginning will be made by individuals but others will be involved more and more.

It was an axiom with him—"that if one man gains spiritually the whole world gains with him. If one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent."

So he involved himself in the most sustained inner struggle for self-transformation, seeking to be perfect as "his Father in heaven is perfect". At the same time and in the same process he wanted to involve the whole man-kind in his experi-

ments. He used the scientific analogy and suggested that nothing in our everyday experience gives us any reason for supposing that an infinitely small thing like the atom can store so much energy yet under certain drastic treatments its immense energy can be released. So when the mind is subjected to certain rather drastic treatments the power of the mind becomes manifest not only to the mind itself, but also, (by its reflection in external behaviour) to other minds.

This may be held to be a mystic's faith but Gandhiji who disclaimed any claim to mysticism and considered himself to be a practical-idealist would argue, 'It is only by making physical experiments that we can discover the intimate nature of matter and its potentialities. And it is only by making psychological, moral and spiritual experiments that we can discover the intimate nature of the mind and its potentialities....'

His case is that in the ordinary circumstances of the average sensual life these potentialities remain latent and unmanifested. If we would realise them, we must fulfil certain conditions and obey certain rules, which his own experience after experiments had shown empirically to be valid.

He invited all to examine this thesis of non-violence as a solvent to tensions within and among nations with an open mind, 'as befits all searchers after Truth.'

He proposed that radical changes in human conditions and surroundings can be possible only 'by raising a ferment in society. There are only two methods of doing this, violent and non-violent. Violent pressure is felt on the physical being and it degrades him who uses it and depresses the victim. But non violent pressure exerted through self-suffering works in an entirely different way. It touches not the physical body but it touches and strengthens the moral fibre of those against whom it is used by making their conversion easy.'

Society and the world are already full of struggles. Hence he developed the science of Ahimsa and its technique of non-violence, holding that the cumulative triumphs of advancing organisation and progressive technology can not alter the basic fact of man's physical limitations compatible with a practically

infinite capacity for spiritual progress which he may share with willing participants.

Sooner or later it will be realised that this votary of Truth had his 'feet firmly planted on the ground of science and that the idealist was the most practical of visionaries.'

But this most practical of visionaries has at times a greatness that defies description.

Lawrence Houseman noted this forcefully, when he said.

'You are a strange man Mr. Gandhi, you are so sincere that you embarrass us, so simple that you baffle us.'

His pattern of treatment of the malady of modern civilization has therefore to be assessed in the light of modern scientific knowledge.

Here I can do better justice, if I quote my distinguished scientist friend Dr. Pryadarajan Roy, D.Sc., F.N.I. "In the midst of the vast accumulation of power and wealth, and great potentiality for happiness due to the marvellous progress of science and technology, it cannot be denied that man is still unhappy. There is a conflict and discord to-day between man's life and instinct. All enlightened people will agree with the view that there is very little worthy of value in a life of mere eating, drinking and bargaining, or in a life meant merely for earning a decent living with its attendant enjoyment and pleasures. Few will certainly admit that the pleasure of senses is the end of existence, though that is almost universally pursued. There seems to be an incurable variance between the life which men covet for themselves and which they admire in others. We pay our most willing homage to selfless social workers, prophets, and saints, though self is our only concern in life. Half the efforts of mankind in this machine age are for diminution of labour, yet it is labour that we instinctively honour, for history is a record of human efforts and human labour. There is thus a spontaneous appreciation of value in things, which is in direct conflict with our pursuit of material utility. This is presumably the course which the evolutionary process of the human mind follows. The dichotomy of culture into scientific materialism and

humanitarian spiritualism or religion is rather an artificial and illusory one. Neither of these, when cultivated in isolation, can guide the human destiny along its proper evolutionary course. Exclusive pursuit of one in preference to the other has landed itself into a state of stagnation and corruption with results disastrous to the society, civilization, and human welfare in general. Unreasoned faith in religious injunctions and rituals has been the prolific source of dogmatism and fanaticism, leading to widespread violence, hatred, cruelty, barbarity, and war on many occasions in the history of human civilization. The doctrine of scientific materialism disowning the necessity of any higher ideal and purpose in life except that of a good and comfortable living, or the necessity of admitting of any higher power as an eternal cause of all existence guiding the destiny of man, has been, on the other hand responsible for an inordinate lust and competition for power among nations and groups of different political ideologies. This has also given rise to a new type of dogmatism with the regimentation of human thought and action, leading to intolerance and violence. The last two global wars and the present feverish race for the production of increasingly dreadful armaments and weapons of war among the powerful nations so provide unmistakeable evidence for this assertion. Thus paradoxically enough science, which stands for reason, has produced an atmosphere of unreason with intolerance, hatred, and violence in its train all over the world. This has particularly affected the younger generations—the student community in every country, filtering down to the school boys. The aftermath of the last global war has brought this social malady to the surface along with the destruction of all those, man held dear in life and with the uprooting of masses of humanity from their ancestral homeland and familiar environment. Ideologies of political parties with their violence-based revolutionary programme, and their subtle propaganda, holding an infallible promise of the establishment of a kingdom of plenty and pleasure on earth, has also contributed in no small measure to the creation of this type of aberration in the immature and easily impressionable mind.

It thus follows from the considerations set forth above that for the evolution of the human mind and for the peace, happiness, and welfare of the society, material advancement must be founded on, and controlled by, spiritual principles and values. Scientific education and pursuit must be wedded to spiritual training and humanitarian studies. This is what the late Professor Albert Einstein, the most eminent scientist of the current century, meant when he made this observation :

‘Science without religion is lame and religion without science is blind’. By religion he meant the universal religion of man, manifesting itself in selfless service, sacrifice, charity, non-violence and love for all, and not the conventional and communal religions of rites and ceremonies, which often breed dogmatism, fanaticism, intolerance, hatred and violence.

The present trend in the development of physical science, particularly in quantum mechanics, leading to the formulation of the Principle of Uncertainty or Indeterminism, seems to have undermined the Doctrine of Determinism or Materialism in science.

The scientists have now come to the conviction that the laws of dead matter cannot be kept separated for ever from those of living things. This is so, because everything that happens as the result of human efforts must be initiated by the mind of man ; and human mind or intellect cannot be detached from nature, of which the object of observation also forms a part. Never knowing but in part, the scientists now find the limitation of their knowledge as can be acquired through reason or intellect and that the reality ever eludes their grasp. Many are inclined to recognise the value of intuition as a better and unerring guide for the realization of truth. Intuition is believed to be born of illumined intelligence, when the ego-sense seems to disappear, and the dichotomy of knowledge as subjective and objective vanishes, merging into an integral cognition.

Man has reached a stage in the evolutionary process of nature higher than that of animal through the development of his mind and intellect, and possesses the potentiality of rising still higher through the unfoldment of his spirit. By the

exercise of his intellect he has developed science and technology, which has enabled him to acquire an immense power to control nature. But this has given rise to many serious problems, as already stated, which threaten the integrity of the society, and the structure of civilization. To eliminate these and to guide the human destiny along its proper evolutionary course, man has got to cultivate the spiritual aspect of his life. Non-violence and love are known to constitute the essence of spirituality. All the great teachers of the world are known to have preached this lesson. Buddha taught us to have a right conduct and compassion for all creatures in the world—Jesus Christ advised us to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. Sages of the Upanisads also preached the same gospel of love, which has been beautifully expressed in a verse in the Bhagavat Gita in the following words :

*samam pas'yan hi sarvatra samavasthitham Is'varam
na hinastyātmanātmanam tato yāti parām gatim.*

'Having learnt that the Divine dwells everywhere and in every individual, one cannot naturally hate another, which will be equivalent to one hating one's ownself. Such a feeling or experience leads one on the way to supreme bliss or salvation'.

It is of particular significance to note here that this doctrine of divinity of man, which was an yearning of faith with the ancient Indian sages, is consistent with the assumption of a cosmic consciousness or an all pervading universal conscious intelligence, as postulated by some eminent scientists like Einstein, Schroedinger, Bohr, Swann and others, while contemplating the harmonization of life with the recent advancement in science, relating to the nature of matter, energy, and the universe. Sparks of this cosmic consciousness are supposed to flash occasionally as intuitive truths in individual minds. Followed as a creed in practical life this doctrine will naturally reveal itself in the form of non-violence and love in our conduct, as a solvent for all distinctions, differences, discords and diversities. For, love begets love, and kindness begets kindness. It is said that this is a law which knows no exception.

It resembles, in fact, one of the fundamental laws of motion in Nature, formulated by Newton, which states: 'To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction'. It may therefore be stated that the same holds good equally for violent and non-violent action. So, violence cannot eliminate violence, but can only keep it suppressed if it be stronger than that of its opponent. War will never end war, as it has not done in the past, but simply creates a balance of power with a feverish armament race under a more or less unstable equilibrium of apparent peace or what is now generally known as cold war. Non-violence has, therefore, been rightly suggested as a moral substitute for war by many eminent thinkers of the world. However, non-violence to be truly effective, has to be followed not merely as a policy of expediency or as some sort of passive resistance against stronger power of violence, but as a spiritual creed of love and self-suffering in order to transmute enmity and hatred into friendship and consciousness of unity. "All the evil like international conflicts, ideological discords, religious wrangles, social injustices, economic exploitations, political tyrannies, etc., from which the world is suffering to-day, are likely to disappear if we adjust our conduct according to the law of non-violence and love. This was realized in our age by Mahatma Gandhi, more than any one else, who adopted and practised non-violence in thoughts, words and deeds along with love of humanity as a creed in life. As an apostle of non-violence and a friend of the poor and down trodden, Mahatma applied this new technique of fighting evils and as is well-known, succeeded in winning the independence and freedom of India from the British control."

THE GANDHIAN PLAN

Gandhiji has been called by Shri Mahadev Desai as a bridge-builder and in fact the effect of his ideas in promoting the slow drift of men towards conciliation and a civilised way of removing their tensions and settling their disputes is being increasingly appreciated. Though he believed that exploitation was one of the economic evils of mechanisation, he did not make the mistake of holding that all exploitation will cease the moment we do away with the machine. In fact he was not unaware that exploitation may begin with the rickshaw and vanish with the aeroplane economy. Much of our rural exploitation goes on without machine having anything to do with it and though the social maladjustment caused by the advent of the machine all over the world and in India particularly are well known, it cannot be said that in the balance-sheet of good and evil resulting from mechanisation, the entries should be only under the head of evil. But it is the totality of social welfare which must determine the merit of an institution and Gandhiji was therefore more against the machine age than against the machine. When Marxism raised its head as a result of the smouldering of unhappiness of mankind proposing to seize on some such programme of proletarian unity for initiating a period of rapid changes guided by the light of its doctrines, Gandhiji proposed the conception of the dignity of the human nature and a worthy moral force and tried to inoculate the society against the revolutionary application of Marxism to a certain extent. At the same time he told the members of the Gandhi Seva Sangham at Sabli (Harijan, 28th March, 1936). "There is no such thing as Gandhism and I do not want to leave any sect after me. I do not claim to have originated any new principle or doctrine. I have simply tried in my own way to apply the principles to our daily life and problems.....the opinions I have formed and the conclusion I have arrived at are not final. I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to try the experiment in both on as vast a scale as I can do. In doing so I have sometimes learnt by

my errors ; life and its problems have thus become to me so many experiments in the practice of truth and non-violence. By instinct I have been truthful but not non-violent. In fact it was in the course of my pursuit of truth that I discovered non-violence." In a letter to Sreemati Prema Ben Kantak reported in Bombay Chronicle on the 7th October, 1936, he said, "In a wide sense of the word, socialism is a philosophy of life and it covers and includes all aspects of life. But ordinarily socialism means a certain economic theory and when I talk of it I mean that economic theory." Gandhiji is as staunch a resister of the exploitation of the down-trodden as any socialist. He even goes further and not only suggests stoppage of exploitation of the masses by the rich classes but also by the possessor of intellect. As a practical proposition he feels that man will not shed his possessiveness and acquisitive nature within a measurable distance of time and therefore he should be encouraged to take a step in the way of dispossessing himself by being encouraged to hold property in trust for the society and not for himself. That made his theory of trusteeship but it was not a piece of rhetoric because he never propounds any theory without providing means for giving practical effect to it. To many, this idea of trusteeship may appear to be an anachronism or may mean something like feudal revivalism. So Gandhiji sought to provide means for giving practical effect to his ideas. His trustees may not be statutory trustees but they are constructive trustees in regard to the due fulfilment of their respective trust. In his idea of trust ownership a person must consider himself a trustee of all wealth which he collects. He will be permitted to retain only a small percentage of this for his personal use. This manner and purpose for which the rest will be used may have to be determined by social necessity. What wealth or income he retains for himself does not depend on his own wish or whim or even his own will. The maximum personal income is limited to 12 times the minimum. This method of fixing the limit, according to many economists is more scientific than fixing other wise ad hoc inasmuch as the maximum can vary with the economic conditions of the country. Again as Professor Dantwala pointed out, for all

practical purposes the concept of trust ownership is not very different from that of socialists' ownership. In neither case can the ownership be exploited for private property. In neither case will the direction and management depend on the whims and interest of the trustees. Both will be controlled in the interest of society. When we look into the rights and obligations of a trustee, we find that he very much resembles the manager of a socialist firm or factory both in the matter of personal gain and freedom of the working of the plant. But it is noteworthy that there is a difference and the trustee is a self-appointed manager. Under the Gandhian scheme the owner is converted into a trustee irrespective of his ability as a manager. But then this difference is inherent in the technique of social change advocated by Gandhiji. It has been rightly pointed out that Gandhiji's choice of the principle of trusteeship was determined not so much by its economic implication as by his method of bringing a social change. Consistent with his method of non-violence, he wanted to give a chance to the capitalist to improve before he is asked to quit. So Gandhiji always pleaded and argued with the zemindars and capitalists to voluntarily submit themselves to discipline and restraint of trusteeship. There was not so much for State sanction as for inner conviction. In Gandhiji's scheme of non-violent revolution, power is not seized but gradually accrues to the people and so there is no need for a transitional period of dictatorship. One may or may not believe in the...efficiency or practicability of this method of bringing about a revolutionary change but one can understand why in the Gandhian scheme of society there is a relaxation of power and authority of the State for ushering changes or for preserving the new order. Gandhiji knew that the slow issue of general ideas into practical consequences is not wholly due to inefficiency of human character. There is a problem to be solved and as Professor Whitehead has eloquently said, "The difficulty is thus this—It may be possible to conceive of a reorganisation of society, adequate for the removal of some evil without destroying the social organisation and the civilisation which depends on it. The allied plea is that there is no known way of removing the

evil without the introduction of worse evils of some other type". In Gandhiji's discovery of untried forms of human and social relations and of the economic structure of a non-violent society, Gandhiji's social philosophy is deeply reflected. This marks a conception of brotherhood of man and importance of man as a whole rather than as a class. At the risk of oversimplification, Gandhiji believes that this new non-violent society will have to be less complex than the one at present. Complexity may be a matter of pride to many, not to him. The factors which affect every individual must be compressed within the ken of his mental vision. All the factors which have a basic bearing on his life such as food, cloth, home must be close to man and only then he will be able to control them and use them for his own needs. It is true that Gandhiji wants a smaller world for the common man but that does not mean that he wants to deny him the luxury of a cultivated life or the good things of the world in general. He feels that at present the majority have no access either to a good life or a civilised way of living. While therefore, he advocates narrower frontiers of localised economy in order that the common man may live more and more independently and save himself from the depredations and competitions of a world where success goes only to the fittest while misery swallows up the less competent struggler, Gandhiji may be said to accept the equalitarian values of socialism. In this sense he sometimes claimed in the course of discussions with communist and socialist friends that he was a better communist or socialist than they were. There was a fundamental difference however, not only as to the means and technique to be employed but also as regards the goal. Gandhiji preferred to measure human happiness not by the quantity or quality of goods that a man possesses though he accepts the necessity of a very liberal minimum—but he advocated unlike the communists and socialists the creed of simple living and high thinking. He wanted to examine and alter a man's ideals and attitude to life and so he did not encourage the demand of increased productivity with the help of labour saving machines, as his ideal of prosperity differed from that of the socialists and the communists. The Gandhian plan of non-violent society based on decentralised cottage industries

mostly, is therefore condemned as an extraordinary plan which has not the slightest chance of practical implementation. It has been said that notwithstanding the appeal for a voluntary abdication of the riches and the power that riches give for the common good according to the doctrine of trusteeship,—the economic laws will pursue their own course and there will be acquisitiveness so long as man is more or less what he is.

It is necessary, therefore, to stress the fundamental position of Gandhiji. Not only tensions among many nations but also many groups within a nation are the result of struggles between haves and have-nots. This struggle based on exclusive self-interest has not had so far any uplifting result. There are social and economic injustices, inequalities, exploitations of various sorts and many other characteristics of an ailing society and a degenerate civilisation. Sometimes there is in fact violence and at others there are tensions which have affected deeply both the sides. It is impossible to deny this in the present day society of classes and groups and the differences and conflict of their interest. Gandhiji attempted to make masses and classes come together by inducing the individual to submerge his self-interest in the interest of the society as a whole. In order to do this, Gandhiji's attempt was to convert the haves and the have-nots into better human beings, engaged not in mutual conflict and class war but in a common struggle for individual and social good and happiness. He asked the capitalists therefore to consider the wealth which was the product of social cooperation and effort not as their personal possession but as belonging to society as a whole, and to regard themselves as mere trustees. He taught the workers to look upon themselves not as slaves engaged in perpetual war against employers for a higher share in the production but to make a common endeavour to produce and serve the whole society.

The difference between Marxism and Gandhism however is not only in the methods pursued but in the ultimate goal. The only common point between the two is the extreme concern of both for the dumb and starving section of humanity. Gandhiji's difference with Marx becomes obvious because of his emphasis on truth and non-violence and also on the means

to be adopted for the end. His advocacy of mainly productive labour, small self-sufficient units, decentralised political and economic order and a simple way of life follow from the principles to which he adhered all through his life.

If the difference between Gandhism and Marxism is great, the difference between Gandhism and Capitalism is greater still. As Sri K. G. Mashruwala pointedly said, "Gandhi's way to avoid violent struggles is to voluntarily make a series of successive graded changes in the current way of life. Rank, caste,—untouchability must go. Unemployment and hunger must be abolished as also provincialism and communalism. Nationalism must shed its selfish aggressiveness and imperialistic propensities. The difference between the highest and lowest must diminish. The semblance of democracy must give way to a real democracy."

Gandhiji however could not lead the nation long enough to put his ideas into tangible shape in every sphere. His great disciple Vinoba Bhave is elaborating a practical programme so that concrete shape could be given to the Gandhian way of social revolution and reconstruction. He started with Bhoodan movement and after some time he initiated Sampattidan and Buddhidan and Jiwandan movement, the object of all this being the achievement of non-violent moral revolution. Bhoodan is now sufficiently well known but not so Sampattidan. Sampattidan is the first step towards the realisation of Gandhiji's idea of trusteeship. As he himself said, "The theory of trusteeship is not a make-believe and certainly no camouflage. I am confident that it will survive all other theories. It has the sanction of philosophy and religion behind it. That possessors of wealth have not caught up to the theory does not prove its inefficiency; it proves the weakness of the wealthy." On this basis of the acceptance of a new outlook of life Vinobaji built his Sampattidan movement. This is the first step in the conversion of capitalism into non-violent and just society of the future in which everyone lives for all and all for everyone, that is the Sarvodaya society of Gandhiji's dream. This conversion or revolution has to be brought about not by force. It is based on consent of both the sides.

The Sampattidan movement expects everyone to contribute a part of his income, normally the 6th part, for his fellow-men. The contribution so made is not to be collected in a fund but everyone has to keep the money with himself and spend it in accordance with the advice of Vinoba or his representatives. The donor is expected however to keep accounts and submit them annually to Vinobaji. It is hoped that when hundreds or thousands of people all over the country have participated in this movement, a climate will be created for taking the next step, towards transformation of the existing social and economic order. The next step will be that of full trusteeship as envisaged by Gandhiji. Under this scheme commercial and industrial enterprises would belong to society. There should be no employer and employee and the management and labour will have joint responsibility to run them not only for themselves but for the good of society as a whole.

It is a paradox that despite Gandhiji's all-absorbing interest for transformation of society and the paramount compulsion to help the under-employed and the poor, the individual was his central concern. He judged individuals not by what they did but by what they were, not by property but personality, not by outer but inner wealth. His was the individualism of a world not of wealth. He tried to mitigate industrialisation because this had made some men rich. Observing other countries he identified industrialisation with materialism and held both as a menace to man's growth. His belief in and defence of the individual made him anti-Communist. At the same time he prophesied 'if we acquiesce in loss of final supramacy of spirit over matter, of liberty and love over brute force, in a few years' time we shall have Bolshevism rampant in this land which was once so holy. It is for the nation to make its own choice.'

What is to be our choice then? Is it to be the capitalist plan of society where only the fittest in the aggressive competitive struggle survive? Or is it to be the suppression of classes and of individuals in the communist pattern of society? Will the workers have right to be remunerated according to the work they do (in a socialist society) or according to their needs? The plan in the Gandhian way of class collaboration

is a village-centred mass-minded society founded on freedom of the individual, trusteeship and decentralisation with its roots in truth and non-violence which ultimately can convert classes and masses,—a society where the rich have learned to hold their riches in trust and where there is none so poor that they have nothing to eat or clothe themselves with where the capitalist is without privilege and the worker is without fear (where the republic of hope is founded on the principles of Gandhiji's Sarvodaya and Ruskin's Unto this last.)

With Tolstoy Gandhiji believed that the root of the present misery lies in man's selfishness and his predatory habit of living upon the toils of others, a habit which has been encouraged rather than restrained under the influence of modern civilisation. Gandhiji therefore said in 'Young India' dated 17.3.27, "My ideal is equal distribution but as far as I can see it is not to be realised at once. I, therefore, work for equitable distribution". In his scheme 'Charka' is the fly-wheel of the new society envisaged, standing as a symbol of common endeavour and of the discipline of labour. In the Hind Swaraj, 1909, Gandhiji characterised our present society as a disease and a nine day's wonder as it takes no heed either of morality or religion. He all along worked for this moral purity and spiritual stamina but he does not take a partial view of man nor does he neglect the demand of man's lower nature. As has been rightly said, his well-known letter to Tagore entitled, "The Great Sentinel" is an irrefutable vindication of the needs of man, but all through the real being in man, the central truth in him is the spirit. The spirit is one in all and to realise this great truth, "one has to lose oneself in the continuous and continuing service of all life." It was a faith in militant individualism and he told every man to look solely to his own conscience and his own reason as his guide and not to any party or State. He suggested to young men that if they wanted revolution in society they should begin by revolutionising their own lives by going to the villages, by undertaking constructive work and by doing scavengers' work for all. He welcomed the revolutionary age in which he lived and sought to turn it into constructive and non-violent channels. No better index

of his plan of society is possible than what he desired in his "India of my dreams" :—

"I shall work for an India, in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country in whose making they have an effective voice ; an India in which there shall be no high class and low class of people ; an India in which all communities shall live in perfect harmony. .

There can be no room in such an India for its curse of untouchability or the curse of the intoxicating drinks and drugs.

Women will enjoy the same rights as men.

Since we shall be at peace with all the rest of the world, neither exploiting, nor being exploited, we should have the smallest army imaginable.

All interests not in conflict with the interests of the dumb millions will be scrupulously respected, whether foreign or indigenous. This is the India of my dreams. I shall be satisfied with nothing else."

THE WORLD PACIFISTS AND THE LEGACY OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Gandhiji invited the war-resisters' Conference to set apart a week in 1949 for a meeting of Indian and other pacifists and suggested, "The people of the West can best help by setting apart specialists to study the inwardness of the movement in India. Let the specialists come to India with an open mind and in a spirit of humility as befits a searcher after truth".

The original plan was a heart to heart talk with the seekers after peace and even up to 1947, it was his faith that by 1949 when the conference was due, he would be able to enlist world-opinion in favour of a proposition which was not only self-proved to the initiated but which, he hoped, would be abundantly proved by the demonstration of the efficacy of non-violence of the strong in India. To that end, Gandhiji was educating public opinion in India, all through, and by his life and action, he emphasised the overpowering force of love and Ahimsa in solving India's many difficulties—till a mad man put an end to it. So when the meeting he would love to join, takes place after all in December 1949 in India, his inspired and enlightened guidance will not be there to solve many baffling and complex questions.

The band of peace-seekers—Indian and foreign, while missing his presence, will have no easy or obvious replies to them but they would do well to recall what this greatest exponent of pacifism in action did, thought and said in this context.

To give his own words, "My work will be finished if I succeed in carrying conviction to the human family that every man or woman, however weak in body, is the guardian of his or her self-respect and liberty. This defence avails though the whole world may be against the individual resister".

The full implication of this will be easier to follow with the knowledge that he, after all he went through, even to the last moment of his life of over 70 years, not only believed in it but believed in it more and more every day.

When in South Africa, and again later more abundantly in India, he was able to gather so faithful a following to face

up to so hard an ordeal, he supplied a proof that what he taught of non-violence and love is "a latent and fundamental truth of human nature, and that it is neither beyond the understanding of ordinary men and women, when the example is set before them, nor beyond their power to adopt and make practical for the support of all great causes."

But even those who admired him and recognised that he had brought a new force in public life feel that "non-violence has not had time to be universal and until it does, we will have to use the old and recognised methods which mean in so many words, acceptance of violence as a remedy for wrong."

Gandhiji would point out "Beings of common clay can and have used Ahimsa with success" and add, "The religion of non-violence is not merely meant for Rishis and Saints. It is meant for the common people as well." When the correspondent of Associated Press of America confronted him in East Bengal with the unrest and the communal out-breaks in India, Gandhiji answered, "All you mentioned can certainly be called Himsha but that can never mean that the creed of non-violence has failed. At best it may be said that I have not yet found the technique for the conversion of the mass-mind."

So this is the crux of the problem and Gandhiji in his last phase wanted to break through the vicious circle of violence by experimenting in India on the use of non-violence on a mass scale, at first for dealing with the many ills of India alone. As he wrote in Harijan, "My aspiration is limited. Perhaps God has not given me the power to guide the world on the path of non-violence. But I have imagined that He has chosen me as His instrument for presenting non-violence to India for dealing with her many ills. And yet I have lost the power to evoke the needed response.....He is a bad general who blames his men for faulty workmanship.

"I know I am not a bad general. I have wisdom enough to know my limitations. I am praying for the light that will dispel darkness. Let those who have a living faith in non-violence join me in the prayer.

"But if we have not the non-violent strength of the brave to fight anarchy and aggression, let us say so and reduce ourselves to a small minority hoping to develop non-violence of the strong in the days to come."

And then he explains his own position thus, "I should work single-handed in the implicit faith that what I fail to make clear to-day, shall be clear some day of itself, or if God wishes it, through some apt word which He may put in my mouth, or some apt work which he may prompt me to do".

Now the seekers after peace must carefully and earnestly consider this position of Gandhiji. That it is abstract truth all will agree but whether in dealing with public affairs and the world situation, they can act in terms of this abstract truth ignoring what many call the ugly realities of to-day is the question-mark before them.

There is fear of aggression. The world crisis is fast developing. As general Eisenhower said, "The world is already divided into two great camps". Gandhiji himself fore-told in 1945, "This war will end this year or the next. It will bring victory to the allies....The victory will be assuredly a prelude to a deadlier war, if any thing could be more deadly."

What then must we do? "Forbear when we can, hit when we must"—say our realists. Not so the seekers of peace. As Horace Alexander has said,—"The attitude of the true pacifist may be summarised in these words: "Evil I shall resist to the utmost of my power, but there are weapons which I will never use, namely the weapons of destruction, Rather I must always strive to overcome evil with good".

This is the common measure of all seekers of peace but is this enough? As Gandhiji explained, "Those who have to bring about radical changes in human conditions and surroundings can not do it except by raising a ferment in society. There are only two methods of doing this, violent and non-violent. Violent pressure is felt on the physical being and it degrades him who uses it and depresses the victim. But non-violent pressure exerted through self-suffering work is an entirely different way. It touches not the physical body but it touches

and strengthens the moral fibre of those against whom it is directed by making their conversion easy."

This is the all important ferment which the active pacifists must spread not only in their own sphere but all over the world so that the radical change in out-look may be effected, so that groups first and then mass-mind may be converted all over the thinking world.

It is with this object in view that Gandhiji re-started the Harijan in February, 1946 and wrote on 2-2-46, "Has the atom bomb exploded my faith in truth and non-violence? Not only has it not done so but it has clearly demonstrated to me that the twins constitute the mightiest force in the world. Before it, the atom bomb is of no effect.

"In saying this I know that I have said nothing new. I merely bear witness to the fact that this force resides in everybody, man, woman, and child. Only in many, it lies dormant but it is capable of being awakened by judicious training. It is further to be observed that without the recognition of this truth and due effort to realize it, there is no escape from self-destruction. The remedy lies in every individual training himself irrespective of response by the neighbours".

Yet that response is much needed for raising the ferment. The modern man has a tendency to escape into his personal life. But for this, he would feel that in the question of world peace, he should have an effective voice.

That between man and man force had failed to solve any problem—is easily conceded. But though it is easily proved that between nation and nation force as an instrument had proved utterly destructive, the mass conscience continues so often to be dormant that it is for ardent souls to attempt to make their ideal the universal ideal,—paving the way for an "International of humanity and Culture". As Gandhiji pointed out, "I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him ; if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent."

This aspect should be carefully borne in mind by all seekers after peace. In the absence of Gandhiji, they have in a sense, a heavier responsibility to bear. Gandhiji, though working

with a limited following, made history. Milestones in 1942, when he was so often misunderstood, were followed by milestones in 1946-47, crowned by his martyrdom. As has been aptly said, "He set the stamp of an idea on an epoch and that idea was non-violence." It was neither a miracle nor an accident that Gandhism became a force in world order. It was all through, right method and proper endeavour that compelled homage as the world witnessed Gandhiji's ceaseless giving of himself to the last limit of sacrifice.

Gandhiji would not allow any wrong approach or any weakness in essentials. The paradox of "moral man in an immoral society" was pressed on his attention but he would not admit defeat. He proposed his peace-brigade or Santi-Sena as a way out and even before the war, he presented Dr. Benes with a weapon not of the weak but of the brave when he suggested an unarmed Czech army—unarmed men, women and children offering non-violent resistance without any bitterness in them. Thus despite his distrust of purely institutional remedies, Gandhiji felt the need of some synthesis of the individual and the organisation, of the unit and the institution, of man and society. The seekers after peace would do well to study carefully the implications of this aspect of the common man who is very similar everywhere and who is apt to behave badly according to the circumstances, when he functions as one in a crowd, influenced by the behaviour of those around him. But the contrary may also be possible, and it is common knowledge that men can achieve more, "merging themselves in the larger whole in heroic but easy self-sacrifice".

With this background, Gandhiji began with the technique which was required for conversion of the mass mind and advocated peace-squads, peace-brigades of volunteers pledged to peace. As always, he wanted India to set an example, even though it was to be an humble beginning.

Again and again he placed his plan before all who cared to see; "What is required is a quiet and resolute demonstration of non-violent strength. The opportunity comes to every one almost daily. There are communal clashes, there are dacoities, there are wordy duels. In all these things, those who are

truly non-violent can and will demonstrate it. If it is shown in an adequate measure, it will not fail to infect their surroundings". At the same time, he was aware of the futility of pious peace societies. As he pointedly wrote, "Just now a good many people are talking of world peace, promoting peace societies and passing resolutions. This is good as far as it goes. But it may not be non-violence."

He wanted an army "saturated with the spirit of non-violence."

As he wrote to General Chiang Kai Shek, "I have told you of my faith in non-violence and of my belief in the effectiveness of this method, if the whole nation could turn to it". But he did not overlook the difficulties and shortcomings that beset the path. "In spite of our having accepted the pledge, we have not developed that irresistible strength that such acceptance of Ahimsa means. The reason is that we have not troubled, we have not laboured to organise such a non-violent army. If we had on a sufficient scale such non-violent arms as the pledge contemplates, we should not have had these riots, and if there had been, we should have quelled the riots or immolated ourselves in the attempt." The pacifists who have come to India under a compulsion of Ahimsa, love and goodwill from all over the world must see to it that the beginning of a legion of international peace be made. W. James spoke of the moral equivalent of war. Our pacifist friends must forge a weapon which in its moral force, must not only transcend all fighting legions, but secure more enduring results. What such a fighting legion inspired by a noble cause, did in Spain has already been recorded in history. What its counterpart wedded to peace, can do in winning lasting laurels will now have to be shown. The discerning can never doubt that even a handful of humanity's unarmed heroes are capable of changing the course of history. By their acts, our friends have to convince the world on this point. It is horrible to think that belief in force may succeed in undermining the Mahatma's influence. So there is a moral problem confronting each one of us. As Mr. Horace Alexander, who has given deep thought on this question has

asked, "Can man's whole life and thought be deflected from the present suicidal tendencies and turned towards paths of peace and goodwill and mutual respect and harmony?"

It was the living faith of Mahatma Gandhi that a new spirit can and must govern human relationships towards this end. In this faith he worked and achieved wonders. Can India keep the faith? Can the pacifists take leadership of untold millions in all the nations, who long for a righteous and lasting settlement and peace, and show them what they must do and what they must suffer that humanity may be vindicated at last ?

"The meek can still inherit the earth, if only they have faith in their meekness". Of this Gandhiji has been the greatest example of our age, and all who seek peace will find in this, an enduring inspiration.

*[An Address contributed to World Pacifist's Seminar at
Sheogram in December 1949]*

GANDHIJI AND THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH

The written and the spoken English of Gandhiji moved so many millions that it is perhaps not out of place to recall in these days of language controversy, the fine use he made of this great medium of expression. The relation between an idea and the word expressing it is so intimate that thought is impossible without words and it is only by a mental abstraction that we can keep them apart. So the question of his medium of expression and his English style—how he clothed in adequate words his profound ideas, has abiding interest for those of us who are bilingual through force of circumstances.

Yet Gandhiji would be most unwilling to abide our question as to his English style. His innate modesty would not allow him to do so. He was very much against style and stylists as such. His views on art reflect his views on this aspect and much of what he said in connection with art might well be applicable to his own style—"all art when true is the expression of the soul."

The outward cover of style had therefore no meaning for him except in so far as it helped the inward idea.

Judged by this yard stick, the style was the man. He wrote and spoke as he was—in English or in the vernacular. His own emphasis was always on what he was driving at, the matter being more important than the manner. But there was almost always that amplitude of total effect which is possible only when the medium of expression is matched to the movement of ideas.

Now by what steps Gandhiji grew up—we now know with some amount of substantial certainty and this is undoubtedly a help in following the history of his mind and thus of his style.

It has been said that of his life nothing is unknown as he took everyone in his confidence and his autobiography is really the key to the study of his personality. His trials and errors in his public speaking and literary ventures are indicated there. We know how he gave all his attention to the Bible and carefully studied the works of Ruskin and Carlyle while the ideas

of Tolstoy and Thoreau cast their spell over him. Though strongly influenced by them Gandhiji never sought to imitate any of these masters of style.

He realized that his function was different and he should not go out of his way to model his writings on theirs. He learnt from them the secret of unconscious art which while flaunting nothing and hankering after nothing yet achieves the maximum of effect. In fact, the restraint and discipline of his mind no less than the economy and discrimination in his use of words give a content and form to his style which showed him as he really was while serving him as a sensitive and forceful medium of expression.

That he lacked no style is also obvious. The fine excess which startles by the exaggeration of a vital truth could be perceived when he spoke of his Himalayan blunder and most of all when he discoursed on Charkha.

Those of us who were in our youthful heaven when he initiated non-cooperation movement in 1919–1922 knew how breath-taking his political speeches and writings could be. His Doctrine of the sword (Young India—11.6.20), his plea for non-violence (9.3.20) and his rejoinder to the poet—The Great Sentinel—are soul-stirring as they reflect the great soul in the grip of a great passion of which the excess has been sublimated but where the words are still aglow as in its embers.

To quote Dr. Rajendra Prasad—"His writings in 'Young India' have passed beyond the pale of polemical politics and entered the realm of classical literature."

Equally enthusiastic are the remarks of John Middleton Murray about his "Hind Swaraj"—"It is a strangely lucid and impressive little book which, one feels, was the outcome of some profound experience of illumination such as seems to have been the common destiny of all great religious teachers."

The crystal clear writings of Gandhiji informed by a tone of elevation invariably appealed to the heart as well as the head. The matter was more important than the manner. This is not to suggest that the manner was unstudied. No such impressive style could be altogether unpractised though it may

well be an effortless art—as in Gandhiji's case. It is remarkable that even in translations by Mahadeb Desai, the artistry does not fail to charm the discerning reader.

After 1924—as years brought imprisonment and disappointments Gandhiji leant more and more on God and His attributes—Truth and Non-violence. His writings and speeches were also imbued with a deep religious tone. Yet there is no topic of importance that we discuss which he did not discuss. Government morals, social problems and religion were frequent themes of his articles though with his unique modesty he always stated that his field was limited and even on subjects with which he was familiar—he could not be always original.

As he wrote to his journalist friends on October, 1926, "I have no false notions about the efficacy of my writings—on the contrary, I know that often the unwritten word is more forcible than the written or the spoken word."

This idea that our acts should speak—governed his speeches which were informed by a spirit of charity to all and malice and hatred not even towards his worst political opponent, no trace of bluff, bluster or brag in his speeches which are models of lucidity and directness. In some, he was thinking aloud and in others, he was praying aloud. He never sought to rouse passion or play on the sentiment of his audience but his appeals to reason were at times enlivened by occasional flashes of humour. His all-pervasive graciousness and ineffable presence all the time created an atmosphere which those who had the privilege of being addressed by him will never forget. All through his life the refrain of his speeches and writings was, 'Let the sum of my acts speak.'

In his later years he seldom spoke in English except to an English audience but his earlier English speeches—such as the Trial speech of 1922 and the speeches at the Round Table Conference (1931) are memorable examples of high and moving thoughts couched in simple words bespeaking a mature style.

His easy and apt use of English idiom added to the charm of his speeches and made even his critics admire his command of English. His critics were many as he was trying to uproot

old prejudices and resettle perennial values. But his spiritual energy was like a flame of fire which illumined those who came within its orbit.

It is a paradox that this master of English discounted the use of English and considered infatuated those of his country men who thought that a knowledge of the English language essential or even necessary for Indians. He even advised students that during the period of transition to equality from inferiority, they should suspend their study of English—as it is a superstition to think that a knowledge of the English language is necessary for imbibing ideas of liberty and developing accuracy of thought.

In 'Young India' of the 2nd February, 1921—he wrote as follows :

"English is a language of international commerce. It is the language of diplomacy, and it contains many a rich literary treasure. It gives us an introduction to western thought and culture. For a few of us, therefore, a knowledge of English is necessary—whereas today English has usurped the dearest place in our hearts and dethroned our mother-tongues. It is an unnatural place due to our unequal relations with Englishmen. The highest development of the Indian mind must be possible without a knowledge of English. To get rid of the infatuation for English is one of the essentials of Swaraj."

Later on, in a much misunderstood controversy with the poet, Gandhiji elaborated his views thus :

"I am as great a believer in free air as the great poet. I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed.

"I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other peoples' houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave.

"I refuse to put the unnecessary strain of learning English on my sisters for the sake of false pride or questionable social advantage. I would have our men and women with literary tastes learn as much of English and other world languages as

they like, and then expect them to give the benefit of their learning to India and to the world like the poet himself."

It is obvious that Gandhiji touched nothing which he did not adorn and there is dignity and significance in the challenge to the monopoly of a language which he knew so well and wrote with the delicacy and grace of a devoted admirer.

"I have learnt to understand him, as I would understand an artist, not by the theories and fantasies of the creed he professes, but by that expression in his practice", wrote the poet.

Even at this length of time and in the midst of the dust and din of controversy which rages now, it is the only true perspective of one who always wanted his life and acts to be his only message to posterity.

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THE GANDHIAN WAY IN TRADE UNIONISM AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS RECONSIDERED

Many of us who have any awareness of the troubled industrial scene—feel we have reached a point of no return and perhaps of no appeal,—despite the efforts made from time to time to ease the tension.

The tension persists and in some areas it is growing at an alarming rate and like the Biblical farmer, the authorities spend all the time in pulling up tares but no ripe crop is harvested at all.

It is strange that while Gandhiji succeeded considerably in improving the industrial relations and more strikingly in industrial peace-making at Ahmedabad, even those who were associated to some extent with him, failed to pursue his achievements in trade-unionism, adapt it to present conditions and re-apply his methods in guiding trade-unions. The splendid example of Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association which Gandhiji called his “laboratory for experiments in labour relations” did not evoke the expected response in stimulating other trade unions to similar activities.

As his discerning biographer Geoffrey Ashe observes, “Today the A.T.L.A.—by-product of his work in a sphere, thought of as partly un-Gandhian, is among his most durable monuments.”

It has over a hundred thousand members and a wide range of activities.

But this brand of Trade Unionism never took root outside Gujrat. It remained largely a “might-have-been.”

Whether politics, economics or sheer compulsion of events led to this glaring failure can not be correctly ascertained. Perhaps, all of these combined to dim the shining example he set at Ahmedabad, when the syntheses of our heritage as Gandhiji saw it and of Western thought as he imbibed it sowed the first seed of a new type of trade union. He tended

the seedling with care and hoped that the tree nurtured with devotion and non-violence would attain to its full stature in time.

We have not the good fortune to have Gandhiji with us to guide our endeavour but believers in the Gandhian heritage of trade unionism would do well to reconsider his well tested guide lines.

It is important to recall that our industrial civilization has been shaped by the industrial revolution which replaced the tools of the independent workmen with machines and transformed craftsmen into hired hands subject to the orders of the managers. Gradually men felt that they were not men but mere numbers. They ran the risk of losing their self-respect and even their identity. In the context of the machine moral man no longer remained wedded to the principles which make life purposeful. Work became drab and the worker developed an aggressive outlook of life, coloured by his own mechanical environment and collective approach to his problems and needs.

Gandhiji realized the implications of this type of organization of industrial civilization and his Hind Swaraj was a strident protest. His front changed later but not his fundamental position when he came to grips with industrial tensions of Ahmedabad. He modified in the then existing conditions, his old stand of total rejection and realised as a trade unionist that management and workers mainly respond to what they think and feel to be their own interest but often it was not even enlightened self-interest. As a trade unionist he also realised that a worker must have security and right to work at reasonable and assured wage and he must be treated as a human being and that it is treatment and not payment alone that matters with most workers. He noted that in this connection some of the managements that apparently paid the highest wages were not those most favoured by the workers. The crudity of management favouring maximum gain at a minimum cost struck him as forcefully as workers justifying their demand of maximum wage for minimum work.

Mere money incentive in both was equally repugnant and repelling to him and he certainly introduced an ethical element in trade unionism by asking workers to limit their demands by curtailing their needs while he advised the employers to curb their profit motive and act as trustees who could legitimately expect only reasonable rewards for their management skill.

His relentless pervasive energy enabled him to study the point of view of both sides factually and with considerable mastery of detail. As in other activities he left no escape routes and adhered to truth and non-violence even in fearful industrial disputes and advised both management and labourers to cancel wrongs and uphold the right stressing the fact that victory does not mean opponent's defeat but his conversion. His epic fast in 1918 was meant more to preserve the unity and pledge of the workers in the dispute though it actually involved both in a mental turmoil and subsequent change of heart. This epic struggle of 1918 must be studied in retrospect by all who want to learn how a righteous struggle is to be conducted for justice for both management and workers and how the principle of arbitration came to be in the fore-front of the Gandhian Scheme of industrial relations.

Traditions of a new technique based on truth and non-violence was foreshadowed leading to conventions and usages which could not be ignored by either side when any labour dispute arose later.

It is necessary to indicate here that Ahmedabad has been ever since a shining example in industrial India and Gandhiji's own words in the Constructive programme, 1911 would bear repetition here.

"Ahmedabad Labour Union is a model for all India to copy. Its basis is non-violence, pure and simple. It has never had a set-back in its career. It has gone on from strength to strength without fuss and without show. It has its hospital, its schools for the children of the Mill-hands, its classes for adults, its own printing press and Khadi Depot and its own residential quarters. Almost all the Mill-hands are voters and decide the fate of elections. They came on the voters list not at

the instance of the Provincial Congress Committee. This organisation has never taken part in the party politics of the Congress. It influences the Municipal policy of the city. It has to its credit very successful strikes which were wholly non-violent. Mill-owners and Labour have governed their relations largely through voluntary arbitration.

"If I had my way, I would regulate all labour organizations of India after the Ahmedabad model."

As a trade unionist Gandhiji was a practical idealist and so he added in conclusion—"A time, I hope, will come when it will be possible for the Trade Union Congress to accept the Ahmedabad method....But I am in no hurry. It will come in its own time".

But despite Gandhiji's considerable success in the industrial scene at Ahmedabad from 1918 to 1922 it must be admitted that the Gandhian brand of trade Unionism and the Ahmedabad method are not much in evidence in India and hopes of Gandhiji have not been fulfilled except in a very limited way.

But the changing outlook among trade unionists in some other countries and the formation of some groups in U.S.A. and Italy trying to practise non-violence in the authentic if not traditional Gandhian way inspire new hopes of a social order based on Co-operation rather than exploitation.

For mutuality of interest and co-operation rather than class consciousness and conflict were Gandhi's guide lines culminating in partnership of labour and capital. While he realised and made allowance for the realities of things as they stood in his own time, his conclusions are statements of principles and as such, they are capable of universal application.

In America "the little strike that grew to La Causa led by the country's most prominent Mexican-American leader Cesar Estrada Chavez to win the battle of the grapes" is a significant example. Those who are not acquainted with its full story may read in the Time magazine of July 4, 1969—a full account of the Mexican Americans on the march under the Gandhian banner in the "battle of the grapes".

A brief selective quotation for our sketch will indicate the great impact of this Gandhian strike on the American public.

and even on world opinion, though its effect on the American economy is otherwise slight enough. As if in a holy crusade, the striking grape farm-workers stage marches that are like religious pilgrimages. The leader of the strike, an unshod, unlettered child of migrant workers claims as his models Zapata, Gandhi, Nehru and Martin Luther King.

For more than a year now, table grapes have been the object of a national boycott that shows he has won the sympathy and support of many Americans and the ire of many others.

The strike known as La Causa has come to represent not only the protest against working conditions among Californian grape pickers but the wider aspirations of the nation's Mexican-American minority as well.

La Causa is Chavez's whole life. For it, he has impoverished himself and endangered his health by fasting."

Some significant facts must be stated in this connection to indicate how purely labour problems may be carried to an ethical level and compel attention.

1. Chavez has never been able to get large numbers of labourer to join the strike but in the Gandhian style, with the few who are loyal to the cause, he goes undaunted in the fight.

2. Most of the employers bitterly dispute Chavez's claim to represent the workers.

3. One reason for the lack of comprehension between Chavez and the grape-growers is that each has different concepts of the fundamental issue.

4. The use of only peaceful means has been central to Chavez's thinking. Following the Gandhian style he realised early that if there were any violence or serious disorder, it would be his responsibility as leader. Based on his Gandhian commitments he says now, "If the strike means the blood of one grower or one grower's son, or one worker or one worker's son, then it is not worth it".

5. Above all, Chavez followed Gandhi's epic fast in Ahmedabad strike and when he began his 25 day fast in February 1968, he did it—"as an act of penance," recalling workers to the non-violent roots of their movement. When

the fast ended, senator Robert Kennedy knelt next to him to receive communion.

6. Chavez's religious conviction mingles with the exigencies of this movement. He opposed like Gandhi birth control. A priest brings him communion daily. To the Press Correspondent, Anson he explained, "God prepares those who have to suffer and take punishment, otherwise, how could we exist.....I really think that He looks after us."

It is now accepted generally that Chavez has dramatised the problems of the Mexican-Americans in the Gandhian way and has really pioneered the Mexican-American Civil Rights-movements. He has focussed attention on the problem of farm-workers and has made their cause, according to competent observers, well-enough known to make the goal of social justice possible.

"Mahatma Gandhi's teachings," according to the issue of American Labour of October 1919, "have had a profound influence on many Americans. But his life had a special meaning to a particular section of American Negroes, who are striving to attain the full measure of equality which the American constitution guarantees them. The front cover of this issue shows Mrs. Martin Luther King, widow of the eminent American Negro leader, with the striking workers of the Charleston Medical College hospital who recently won a hundred day long struggle to gain union recognition and ensure reasonable wages.

"In some ways, this strike was notable. The strikers who were blacks, proclaimed their allegiance to the Mahatma's creed of non-violence.

"They looked upon their strike as a struggle not only of workers wishing to better their lot, but of a minority fighting against odds to attain full racial equality. The support extended by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to the strike gave it a spiritual note, evocative of the struggles waged by the Mahatma."

Then follows the account of how workers win with Gandhian techniques and succeed in making a dramatic

impact on public opinion by the strike of the Charleston hospital workers to have their union recognised and to receive a decent wage.

Significantly enough the leader of the Christian Leadership Conference Ralph David Abernathy fasted in his jail cell while his supporters marched peacefully in the streets proclaiming demands of Negro workers striving for equality and rapid progress and thus posing a major challenge to the American Labour Unions through the power of Gandhian non-violence.

Instances could be multiplied but the object of our sketch is to provide an illustrative not exhaustive programme of the Gandhian way in channelling protest constructively while fighting for justice and full racial equality in both the cases of the Mexican-Americans under Cesar Chavez and the Negroes under Martin Luther King's widow—both openly proclaiming their faith in the non-violent instrument for social justice that Gandhiji emphasised and successfully wielded.

Gandhiji's trade unionism is not the trade unionism as it obtains to-day with its stress on collective bargaining but it may be that the mutuality of interests he pleaded and the idea of trusteeship he evolved may foster social responsibility in both management and workers who would participate as equals in dignity and status if not in emoluments, modifying antipathies arising out of competition and conflicting bargaining.

Already this attitude is in a formative stage in some of the most progressive countries like Yugoslavia where economic warfare is being diminished by emphasising common interest and responsibility as well as worker's participation in management.

In elucidating Gandhian trade unionism while stress has to be laid on the concrete methods by which he actualized his ideas as in Ahmedabad, there is scope for adaptation and even improvisation. As he himself affirmed "I am trying to put people on the road. But it will need many Gandhis to bring the experiment of non-violence to perfection."

One of these is the Sicilian Gandhi, Danilo Dolci a modern specialist in the technique of non-violent labour agitation.

"You may do out of remorse what you did not do out of love" and with this slogan he organised upside-down reverse strike in February 1956.

"Friends of Partinico, we want to become not bandits but Italian Citizens, members of a truly civilised society.

"We are going to spend today fasting and praying in preparation for the festival of work, we will enjoy to-morrow. Our constitution says—work is the right of every citizen and so we will not be breaking any laws by our upside-down strike when we hope none will be cruel enough to stop us from working".

Yet for starting to work on a local road in need of repairing with the poor unemployed Sicilians without any prospect of payment, Danilo was tried and given a 2 month's sentence of imprisonment.

When released later, Danilo Dolci was not to be deterred as he and his devoted followers believed that if the soul is left in darkness and strong hands left without work, mischief and even crimes would follow.

The eventual success of Dolci in Italy is a testimony to his faith in the Gandhian way not only in resolving industrial tensions but in upholding the great Gandhian concept that work is not only man's right but his duty.

Amme Pierrces rag picking campaign for providing a home for the homeless and his insistant plea for a voluntary army against world's poverty are improvisations in the Gandhian spirit and tradition, anticipated by Pierrc Ceresole under Gandhiji's own guidance in international work camp and peace brigades (Santi Senas).

Before starting his fast on 17.3.18 at a prayer meeting in Ahmedabad, Gandhiji explained his reasons for going on a fast. His technique in resolving industrial tensions is here revealed at its source. "From the mine of our ancient culture and civilization I have learnt a principle of life, which, if thoroughly assimilated can enable us who are here to do so much. We have not imbibed the true spirit of the age old pursuit of soul-force, of sacrifice and of self suffering. In our

heart of hearts the tallest of us feel we must copy the Europeans".

Thus the key to this central idea is transforming character of self by soul force by our own self-suffering and sacrifice. Then this character will transform institutions, which in its turn will help to mould masses of men. Thus security and justice may be harmonized.

Gandhiji feels that the ideals of a genuine trade unionist need not be subversive and based only on class war and even on collective bargaining. He realised the complexities of achieving economic justice—a painfully sought goal of working classes but he would strike at its source by removing the potential cause of injustice.

In his own life, he personified the ascetic disciplined attack on our many wants and always stressed on all the need for self-discipline.

For workers of Ahmedabad who would accept his advice he always tried to emphasise the co-relation of rights and duties. Again and again he would urge, "The individual rules himself in a manner that he is not a hindrance to others," and "rights that do not flow directly from duty well performed are not worth having."

Briefly, the aim of his activities as a trade unionist was to recapture the social order as a family writ large. His recurring advice was thus :

"Approach all your problems through truth, non-violence and self-mastery, only thus you can master the other party and the hostile environment."

Gandhiji spent the best part of his life in South Africa working for the labouring classes and shared their joy and sorrows and came to understand their point of view thoroughly.

Coming to India, he studied closely their condition in Ahmedabad and identified himself with their lawful demand. But he would at the same time, work for the good of both capital and labour. He would not build trade-unionism on class war but would advocate co-operation in which he believed. In Harijan (7.11.36) he pointed out to workers.—

"Even if you were a million, you would not be able to run a mill. You lack the talent to do it. You could not run it even if you had a million rupees. You and I believe in co-operation not in class war. If we sometimes non-co-operate with mill owners, we do so to reach co-operation ultimately. We want Ahmedabad and its mill industries to prosper but we want prosperity broad-based on the harmony of all the varying elements."

Gandhiji prescribed as means to seek justice without resorting to violence,—first an appeal to the good sense of the employers, scndly arbitration and if this was not acceptable without any reason, resort to strike properly conducted. This was his lawful means for elimination of bitterness, indiscipline and impatient class strife and that this was not utopian trade-unionism he demonstrated at Ahmedabad textile disputes.

He saw that some capitalists were keen on asserting their right and some trade unionists and workers were bent on forcing their demands sacrificing ethical judgments. So he pleaded in Harijan :

"New methods of enforcing demands are being employed ; workers do not hesitate to injure the property of the employers, dislocate machinery, harass men and women who would not join them." He had no experience of Gherao or he would include it as camouflaged violence and dissuade workers from this.

On clearer persceptive he would lift industrial disputes to the ethical plane, of right pitted against right and try to assuage tragedy by justice and fair play assured to both.

A Gandhian trade unionist would therefore have to scorn the use of fore, open or concealed and armed with resolve born of faith and inflexible consistency devote all his strength to uplift the working class, confronting the rapacity of unreasonable employers with the strength of a righteous struggle. Never seeking to cripple them, he would try for their conversion. Gandhiji while aware of the economic anarchy of industrial society in India and abroad proposed a solvent that might work slowly but surely.

In 1941 he wrote, "I am in no hurry. It will come in its own time".

Signs are forthcoming that in some corners of Europe and U.S.A. and perhaps in some obscure areas, the process has started and it remains for his own countrymen to actualize what might have been India's proud privilege to demonstrate. "Before I teach others and preach to them, I must give an ocular demonstration in my own country" Gandhiji used to say.

He certainly did so at Ahmedabad and it is for Indian trade unionists to follow it up in the authentic way even if all traditional Gandhian methods are far too embarrassing for them.

ON SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF INDUSTRIALISATION AND NEED FOR A PLAN OF INDUSTRIAL ADAPTATION IN THE GANDHIAN WAY

LABOUR co-operation is essential for increased production, more so in an under-developed country like India where labour intensive methods of production are predominantly applied. As is well-known, if the workers slow-down and sabotage new processes, the targets of production can never be achieved. Yet a programme of co-operation for greater production is not always easy to achieve. Labour in India is frequently suspicious and frustrated and even hostile and they do not always feel that they belong to the factory in the way they should.

Even where attempts have been made to adjust the employees to the job, many problems remain. This is because the social implications of industrialisation and the need for a plan of industrial adaptation are not fully realised by many who are in positions of authority.

Industrialisation has thrown a new challenge. As Sir John Maud, in the Oxford Study Conference on the problems of industrial communities, stated, "The impact of industrialisation is at the same time a fearful menace and tremendous opportunity. It threatens to destroy us—to standardise us, barbarise our life by dividing it into compartments of "work" and "leisure", destroy our personal relationship to each other and substitute the impersonal one of cogs in a machine. But at the same time it offers us fullness of life in a sense never within our grasp before : enough food, for example for the two thirds of the world's population who are at present under-fed, and freedom from much of the drudgery at present needed to keep things going, and time to exercise our creative capacities.

What does this challenge demand of us? Chiefly, I suggest, imagination and character. To match the new powers over physical nature given us by pure and applied science, we have to

find in ourselves new vision to show us how to use those powers, and a new integrity to resist the corruption that always becomes more threatening as power increases. "The factory was made for man, not man for the factory." It is easy enough to say that, but infernally difficult to make sure that it is true in practice. The bigger and more powerful the machine, the more danger of its getting out of hand and starting to run us, and the more crucially important it becomes that we remain the master of it. My own conviction is that we only retain our mastery and avoid becoming the servant of the machine by serving something else. That is why what we need most, to meet the impact of industrialisation, is vision and strength of character—continuous, determined striving to live by our answer to the question "What is the purpose of our life on earth?" What are the things we're really prepared to live and die for?

So what I believe we have to do, if we are seriously going in for this adventure of industrialisation, is to keep firm hold of what we believe, for instance about the fundamental difference between good and bad, truth and falsity, beauty and ugliness—and try to build our new industrial society on the rock of those beliefs. For the first nuclear power stations that we are now building in Britain, we need sites with even firmer foundations than we need for conventional stations because the nuclear reactors are not only more powerful but heavier. For much the same sort of reason, our new industrial society needs even stronger foundations than the old.

What those foundations should be in each of our countries, we have to decide for ourselves. For my part I believe the two most important are these. Faith in the supreme value of each individual man and woman and child, and faith in men's capacity to work together. If we have the patience, imagination and courage to go on building on these foundations, I believe there is a chance that the scales of the balance in industrial society will be gradually tilted against slavery and loneliness in favour of freedom and fellowship; there is a chance that more and more industrial workers will take the sort of delight in what they do that creative artists have always taken; we shall dis-

cover the twin secret of leadership and discipline in our industrial life ; and out of a rich diversity of groups and individuals the community will progressively become more of a community. But it will take time and deeper spiritual resources than any human society has so far shown."

Long long ago, Mahatma Gandhi came to almost identical conclusions when he faced the challenge of industrialisation in India, though perhaps in his case, there was an inevitability about the results of industrialisation which he sought to bypass by adaptation as much as by sublimation.

He was not unaware of the new chances of freedom that industrialisation brought in the wake of the new dangers of slavery—"to the machine and the tediousness of repetitive work ; to the factory, shop, office, firm that employs one ; to the trade union or, if one is a small employer, to the trade association ; dangers of slavery to the State." Of this last possibility he was a prophet of the shape of things that had not fully crystallized in his time but which he had the vision to foresee and which we now see in actual fact and tangible shape.

But freedom to choose one's job or change it did not matter much to him though the overcoming of a status conferred on birth by a mobile status certainly meant a lot. So also the possibility of fellowship through trade unions and contacts.

He, however, felt more acutely than even most modern thinkers that our social skills did not advance at the same rate as our technical skills and hence the mal-adjustment.

He was a great individualist but even when he accepted an industrial society and trade unionism as a partially accepted substitute for the expression of the individual personality through his work—he demanded a social and ethical way of life. Here he was pleading for a society not far removed from the simple village society of India where there is stability of social order but where society exercises no compulsion on the individual. Rather the social codes and the desires of the individual are for all practical purposes identical and there is nothing unfixed and unsettled which drives men to desire a change and

strive for it. In fact this adaptation to society, he would like to see also in the industrial scene.

He was therefore always pleading in the context of labour relations that the new industrial order must secure for its individuals and groups (i) satisfaction of material and economic needs, (ii) maintenance of spontaneous co-operation throughout the organisation at all levels, (iii) ethical value so that mankind may not turn out to be a horde of unorganised individuals, actuated by self-interest only, as he all along knew that man may have all the self-love in the world and be miserable.

Regarding these items Gandhiji wanted the following prerequisites viz., (i) hours of labour must leave workmen some hours of leisure, (ii) they must get facilities for their own education, (iii) provision should be made for adequate supply of milk and necessary education for their children, (iv) there should be sanitary dwellings for the workmen, (v) they should be in a position to save enough to maintain themselves during their old age. At present the employers strive to get maximum service with minimum payment of wage and workers on the other hand try to hit upon all tricks whereby they can get maximum pay with minimum work, (vi) the desire for a co-operative society that persists in every person has to be stimulated, (vii) a sense of satisfaction for every member of the community and the industrial society has to be provided.

Gandhiji, however, realised that to blame a system or set of circumstances is easier than to work for its change. Industrialisation, urbanisation and the replacement of a subsistence economy by an exchange economy bring inevitably in its trail, as he knew well, social disturbances and mental maladjustment which though they may be mitigated have, to some extent, to be accepted as part of the price for economic progress. He would ask, 'what price—this progress?'

In India, millions of people cannot move from rural pursuits to factory work without showing the strain of a revolution. New economic process inevitably involves the breakdown of age-old customs and connections. Repetitive factory work, strange and

drab surroundings and new source of income vastly affect a villager's attitude to his family, his religion and his neighbour.

When we are trying to have so many steel plants, we should not be unmindful of the social costs thereof. It has been seen in other countries also that the structure of the family, the suicide rate and the ordinary man's sense of values perceptibly alter with rapid industrialisation and the old social patterns breakdown. These are possible positive evils previously almost unknown in a largely rural society, the evils, peculiar to an industrial slum and robot-like operations in factories.

It has been said by a competent critic, "In India the new working classes for expanding industrialism will be recruited at very low wages. Capital is scarce and slow to fructify while labour is plentiful. The limitation of consumption, canalisation of investment to basic industries all taking place in a country where living standards are already low and where population is quickly rising would mean quite inevitably that for the working classes at least the discomforts of social change are being superadded to economic discontent. In other words, planned industrialisation entails requiring large parts of Indian society to suffer extensive social readjustment for the sake of material compensation that is slow to appear. . . . The attitude is naturally most common in India that the social revolution that accompanies industrial progress is a threat to the very fact of civilisation. It leads to a passionate rejection of material progress on the grounds that social costs are too high. Mahatma Gandhi is, of course, the greatest example of this perennial attitude to the social costs of economic progress. The political party which is now in power and which rightly claims the closest allegiance to the Mahatma's views, in fact, repudiate his doctrine on this point and takes the progressive line that economical progress has to be pushed forward at any cost including any social cost ; that social costs can and must be minimised but also must be paid.

This healthy determination to meet the social costs of progress is seldom clearly confessed, for obvious political reasons. The Congress party mostly prefers to emphasise one or other

of its two alternative social policies : modified Gandhism which claims to carry forward into the new economic situation much of the old society unchanged ; or alternatively socialist planning which claims to be able to plan social revolution painlessly as well as the economic revolution, or more boldly to plan social costs out of existence. An instance of the first is the effort to marry the handloom and the automatic loom in one coherent textile policy. An instance of the second is the familiar Indian conception of labour-management relations in industry.

I offer no criticism of either of these social doctrines. They are political ideologies, and thus largely beyond the reach of factual criticism. Firstly, there is this much truth in both, namely, that we do not have to be fatalistic about all social costs, some of which can indeed be mitigated by intelligent planned intervention. Secondly, it would be highly dangerous to believe in either wholly, for the fact is no amount of socialist planning or Gandhian palliatives is going to eliminate the painful social costs of the economic revolution that is now under way in India. This country is not going to move smoothly and painlessly forward into industrialism, either maintaining her old social order unchanged or revolutionising it without disturbance or suffering for anyone. The desire to telescope the industrial revolution of Europe into a short period without paying any of the high social costs imposed by it is admirable but it contains a measure of illusion. It may well be possible to avoid here some of the blackest sufferings of the Industrial Revolution in England ; but Indian society, from its size and structure, will inescapably meet other difficulties just as serious. . . The political party that is in power during an industrial revolution can never afford to lose sight of the fact that precisely in the measure that its economic policy succeeds, it will get less credit for material progress and more blame for the social upsets that material progress causes."

But meanwhile, according to this writer, the pressure of economic want and of stark poverty leaves no choice and the progress towards industrialism has to be continued and the social costs have to be suffered as they arise—mitigated where

they can be. The social upsets that will accompany the realisation of India's plan for progress cannot however be regarded as unmixed evils. The undivided family will disintegrate. Money values will make their way in the rural economy and urbanisation as well as industrial slums will increase but "to treat all of them as irremediable pathological conditions would be unfair. The old morality will decline and a new morality in a new society will probably emerge. Promiscuity, the tension and the depravity of urban industrial life in the land of villages, castes and joint families will be most obvious. Possibly the new form of association will attract less attention but it is necessary to bear in mind the constructive shape of social change when we take notice of the social disturbances which are familiar to all in cities like Calcutta, Bombay and Kanpur."

This is no doubt an able criticism which our enthusiasts for industrialisation should note but it is not fair in so far as it damns with faint praise or blame, the Government or the party that owes allegiance to Gandhiji. It also does little to appreciate the Gandhian way in industrial relations.

Gandhiji was one of the first to give close attention to the socio-cultural disequilibrium that emerged in the wake of industrialisation.

- (i) Violence in industrial relations.
- (ii) Alcoholism.
- (iii) Exacerbated communal, linguistic and provincialist struggles.
- (iv) Juvenile delinquency.
- (v) Increase in adult crime.
- (vi) Decay in craftsmanship and professional morality.
- (vii) Commercialisation of family relationships.
- (viii) Increased prostitution

all engaged his attention and his enquiring mind sought to discover the intensity of these social maladies. He quickly realised that industry brings with it more and thornier problems to the

community than any society has ever had to face before and he experimented in various ways to see what he could do to help overcome the problems of present-day industrialisation. He always held that the community is more important than industry and he never believed that plenty can be achieved at the expense of human freedom and happiness. He also did not accept that people in highly industrialised communities are happier than those living in more primitive agricultural communities. One of his distinguished countrymen recently stated in an international gathering that India is the only country in the world where such an argument could be raised today but it is raised wherever thinking men ask—what is the point in awakening in Indians a desire for motor car and television sets when they can be perhaps peacefully content with a way of life which does not put a premium on either. Disruption of the family and the resultant disorientation of children were specially repugnant to him. He had seen its effect in South Africa before he came to stay in India and study the problem here. He never accepted the position that this social cost must be paid for the economic progress. He in his own way tried to meet the challenge of industrialisation by evolving a new technique and a dynamic tradition conducive to painless introduction of change. Torn by tensions from within and without, the worker found in the tradition which he evolved a force for stabilising and making industrial adaptations easy and smooth under his effective leadership in Ahmedabad. He also evolved the proper technique for the introduction of psychological and physical changes which are so very necessary to industry if it is to survive.

He, however, did more as he went into the roots of the question of conflicting attitudes of the industrialists and the workers when he stressed the mutuality of interests of the employers and the employees. That, according to him was the change needed most of the vast changes that were taking place all over. He demonstrated by the results he achieved at Ahmedabad that not only smooth but pleasant results in industrial adaptation are possible even though technological changes

bring up factors that might upset the old and existing pattern of life.

The two fundamental social ideas, viz., (i) demand for democratic expression and (ii) concept that industry exists for social purpose were focussed by him again and again and he always insisted that industry must change itself to fit in with these two attitudes.

Leadership and discipline were the two keys that he would place in the hands of the trade unionists to achieve these two things. His experiments taught him that a disciplined attack on the many problems of our industrial society was possible if the correlation of rights and duties was fully understood. So he always insisted that all concerned should interpret discipline rightly and follow it loyally. As he said in a famous article in the Harijan, "I venture to suggest that rights that do not flow directly from duty well-performed are not worth having."

To improve the workers' sense of discipline and to stimulate their latent leadership Gandhiji wanted to introduce social changes so that workers' activities and spending habits might be altered. He would inculcate not only subsidiary skill and training in spinning and weaving but social skills as well. He also advised a well-regulated and thrifty way of life where the stress was not on multiplication of demands and where unostentatious way of life was insured in its own dignity. He made many of his princely followers accept voluntary poverty while he always tried to raise the living standards of the lowliest Harijan as well as of all who are below the marginal level of subsistence. He hoped that union leadership would be forthcoming to sponsor social and political changes. He also expected that the workers would be aided to this end by government as well as by employers. As in the case of the others so also in the case of the workers he sought to mould men by moulding their minds first and developing their latent talent by a psychological and social approach. Hence the need for the Gandhian technique and tradition in industrial relations and industrial adaptation.

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